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PART I

ANTI-SEMITISM IN KIERKEGAARD

- WITH CONSTANT REGARD TO

HIS INDIVIDUALISM

by

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SRM, BA (Hons.) (Open)

Submitted on 24th November 2009

for the Degree of MPhil

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Elsebeth Wulff (BA(Hons.)(Open)):

ANTI-SEMITISM IN KIERKEGAARD -

WITH CONSTANT REGARD TO HIS INDIVIDUALISM

A B S T R A C T

Søren Kierkegaard (1813-55), the Danish Philosopher, is known for his advocacy of the moral responsibility of the individual as well as his adverseness towards systems, especially the Hegelian system, and the authority of the State over the Church.

From all these points of view, it is surprising to find the *oeuvre* interspersed with anti-Semitic remarks. The Journals must be regarded as belonging to the *oeuvre* and they constitute the main part of the evidence, although the works are equally compromised.

The first half of the thesis is providing a historical background and partly forestalling the remark that in those days 'they were all at it'. It also sets up premises, definition and methodology used, in preparation for the second half.

The second half of the thesis presents the evidence which falls into three categories: Biblical, social, biological (racial) anti-Semitism. It then discusses the evidence, before, in the last chapter, it addresses the exculpatists and the surprising fact that Kierkegaard today is seen as a spokesman for the minorities. It also looks at later writers who

are deeply influenced by Kierkegaard's ideas,
many of them Jewish.

In the Conclusion, there is a brief
discussion of the implications of the results of
this research. Can Kierkegaard go on being seen
as a champion for the wronged and suppressed?
Can his readers go on ignoring the sheer volume
of anti-Semitism in his writings? Can one make
oneself blind to parts of a philosopher's texts?
Is it either/or?

Elsebeth Wulff

Oxford - October 2009

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"Die Philosophie aber muss sich
hüten, erbaulich sein zu wollen."

Hegel, G.W.F.

1. NOTE

Epigraph: Hegel, G.W.F.,
Phänomenologie des Geistes,
Vorrede, P.9. (First publ.
1807, first tr. 1910...1988),
Meiner Verlag, Hamburg, Ger.
(tr.) Miller, A.V. *Phenomeno-
logy of Spirit*, Preface (1977),
Oxford University Press,
Oxford, U.K., p.6: "But
philosophy must beware of the
wish to be edifying."

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations have been used at a minimum. Whole titles have been re-introduced in every Chapter's Notes for convenience. Please find below the most common abbreviations:

- Breve* - Thulstrup, N. (ed.), *Breve og Actstykker vedrørende Søren Kierkegaard* [Letters and Documents concerning SK] (1953)
- JR* - Hong, H.V. & E.H. (eds. & trs.) *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers* (1978)
- Ktl.* - Rohde, H.P. (ed.) *Auktionsprotokol over Søren Kierkegaards Bogsamling* [Auction Catalogue over SK's Library] (1967)
- KW* - Hong, H.V. & E.H. (eds. & trs.) *Kierkegaard's Writings* (1978-2000)
- Letters* - Hong, *ibid.*, Vol. XXV, (tr.) Rosenmeier, H., (1978)
- Pap.* - Thulstrup, N. (ed.) *Søren Kierkegaard's Papirer* [SK's Papers] (1968-70)
- SV* - Heiberg, J.L. & Drachmann, A.B. (eds.) *Søren Kierkegaards Samlede Værker* [SK's Collected Works] (1920-38)

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Other information

All translations in this thesis have been done by the author, unless stated otherwise. References have been given wherever possible to the Hong translations.

Single inverted commas have been used around paraphrasings in the text, or where ironic distance was desired. Double inverted commas have been used around verbatim quotations in the text. Danish titles have been translated inside square brackets and only been italicized there if there is a translation in print under that title.

REFERENCE BOOKS USED

BIBLES:

English

The Holy Bible (O.T. & N.T.)

Appointed to be read in churches

Oxford University Press

London, New York, Toronto

No date provided

Authorized King James Translation

The Holy Scriptures (O.T.)

The British & Foreign Bible Society

London 1985 (Hebrew & English)

King James Translation

Danish

Bibelen (O.T. & N.T.)

Den Hellige Skrifter Kanoniske Bøger

Det Danske Bibelselskab

Ekspedition P. Haase & Søn

Løvstræde 8, Copenhagen (1961)

Authorized tr. of 16th Dec. 1931

Other liturgical books used

Pentateuch & Haftorahs, (ed.)

Hertz, J.H. (1960...96) Soncino Press,

Ldn., Hebrew Text w. English tr. &

Commentary.

The Authorised Daily Prayer Book

of the United Hebrew Congregations

(ed.) Singer, S. (1962...1988) Eyre &

Spottiswoode, Ldn.

DICTIONARIES: English/English

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of

Current English (1995) (ed.) Thompson,

D., Clarendon Press, Oxford, U.K.

Danish-English/English-Danish

The Standard Danish-English, English-

Danish Dictionary (1985) (ed.) Axelsen,

J., Cassell, Ldn.

Hebrew-English

201 Hebrew Verbs, (1970) Barron's,

New York.

*The New Dictionary, Hebrew-English
English-Hebrew (1993) (ed.) Lazar, Y.,
Kuperard, Ldn.*

*English-Hebrew Hebrew-English Dictio-
nary (1998) (eds.) Segal, M. & Dagut, M.B.,
Kiryat-Sefer, Jerusalem*

*English-Hebrew Hebrew-English Dictio-
nary (1961...68) (ed.) Ben-Yehuda, E.,
Steimatzky's Agency Ltd. & Washington
Square Press Inc., New York.*

INTRODUCTION

Kierkegaard can be read at many levels and from many angles, which is why the secondary literature is so rich. His style is anecdotal and intimate. Anyone can read him, as a storyteller, but couched in story after story lies a strong and disciplined philosophical apparatus which reveals itself more and more with each reading and with one's own increasing ability to recognize the theories of Kant, Hegel, Descartes, Schopenhauer and Spinoza, to mention a few. The *oeuvre* is enormous, considering it was produced within a period of approximately fifteen years: 14 volumes of works and 12 volumes, 22 books, of journals.¹ When I first ventured into Kierkegaard's world, I was enchanted by all the vignettes of Copenhagen life almost two hundred years ago, but then also brought up sharply by remark after remark about Jews, nearly always negative. The idea of making a thesis out of this facet of Kierkegaard's writings followed naturally after.

I suspected anti-Semitism, but could not be sure. Very little had been written about it and what there was, was exculpatory. I would have to go through both works and journals with a fine tooth comb and then weigh up how much there was and of what kind. In a way, it was simple. It was strenuous, but simple. It would be time-consuming and maybe controversial.

It may not seem such a great discovery to find anti-Semitism in a nineteenth-century writer, but Kierkegaard constitutes a special case. It is he who speaks about the responsibility of the Single Individual [*hiin Enkelte*], how it is not right to do in a group what is not right to do as one person alone. Kierkegaard's name is synonymous with Individualism as much as Socrates, via Plato, and Christianity. There seems to be a philosophical incoherence in the combination of anti-Semitism (the person as a clone) and Individualism (the person as unique). How could such an eminent philosopher as Kierkegaard operate these two systems and not be aware of their mutual exclusivity?

The exculpators can be counted on the fingers of one hand, but the most methodical one

is Bruce Kirmmse.² He is also the one who is closest to a criticism, saying, "Quite properly, Kierkegaard's antisemitic language is and remains offensive."³ However, only two years later, he is softening the language, writing,

Kierkegaard's rhetoric is very provocative. He forces us to take a position. And by taking the situation seriously we learn that, however offensive and objectionable his rhetoric is, it doesn't really have a great deal to do with Jews and Judaism, but is principally a part of Kierkegaard's battle against the lukewarm and flimsy Christendom of his times.⁴

I shall argue here that using someone's name, Jew, as a term of abuse, has everything to do with that person. It cannot escape criticism. Even if directed against the Danish clergy, it *is* anti-Semitism.

I came to Kirmmse some years into my research for my thesis and was heartened to read his comment at the end of the first of two papers similarly entitled 'Kierkegaard, Jews and Judaism', albeit the first one in Danish:

The entire question of the origins and implications of Kierkegaard's anti-semitic language deserves further investigation.⁵

The first paper was published in 1992 in the ecclesiastical journal, *Kirkehistoriske Samlin-*

ger. It was clearly tailored for a readership of theologians and was double the length of essentially the same paper, published in 1994 in the specialist journal *Kierkegaardiana*. Sadly, Kirmmse had not chosen to be the one to further explore the subject although he saw the need for it. The papers are very explanatory and Kierkegaard's views on Jews and Judaism are displayed and analyzed, but not queried or corrected, which is what I have tried to do.

As Kirmmse sees it, Kierkegaard starts with a 'tripartite schema', or 3-stage pattern: Paganism, Judaism and Christianity, much in the same way as he philosophically operated with three stages: aesthetics, ethics and religion. This 3-stage structure was then collapsed into 2, i.e. a 'dualistic structure'. Paganism and Judaism were fused, so that the middle link, Judaism, was degraded to the status of Paganism, but still called Judaism. Now Judaism stood opposite Christianity, but in the end Christianity too was degraded and subsumed by Judaism. It was now called Christendom but accused of being 'Jewish'.

Kirmmse does not attempt to put right any of the misunderstandings Kierkegaard presents as facts about Judaism. He just presents them. For instance, Kierkegaard states that Judaism is an abstract faith, due to the Jewish God being abstract, and therefore Jews like abstracts and numbers, such as 'money', 'politics' and 'the public'. Jews are about 'nature' (material) while Christians are about 'spirit'. This has the effect that Jews expect rewards in this world, in the shape of worldly success, they may suffer for a while but are then rewarded in this life. Christians on the other hand suffer their whole life through and then receive 'Eternity' [Evigheden]. Jews have no such hopes. Jews are born Jews, one cannot become a Jew, says Kierkegaard, and repeats Kirmmse, without trying to evaluate such a statement: Is it true? Is it false? 'Jews seek eternal life through procreation, for they have no other. In Judaism marriage is the value, in Christianity celibacy, virginity, abstinence'; for: 'My Kingdom is not of this world'. The Jew seeks to be comfortable and at peace, but the true Christian is never at peace. Christianity is motion, perpetual unrest. Although Kirmmse mentions the three

archetypes: Don Juan, Faust and the Wandering Jew (there were a few more, as for instance Don Quixote) at the start, he makes no connection between Goethe's *Faust* and Kierkegaard's demand for a Christianity that is 'eternally striving' and 'never satisfied'.

Kirmmse calls Kierkegaard's anti-Semitism "reflexive" because it "recoils" on himself and his, more "than it does on any actual Jews". This can be disputed, but in any case there is a vast difference between being called a 'cowardly Jew' and calling oneself a poor wandering Jew, alone in the world: one is hatred, the other is self-pity. Furthermore, if Kierkegaard does not include himself, but accuses his co-believers of being 'Jewish', that does not reflect on himself, but on the Other; or, more specifically: on the other Christians.

Kirmmse is, like me, struck by Kierkegaard's use of what he calls the "veterinary expressions":

Kierkegaard's notorious asceticism has become so radical that the manner in which he speaks of women, childbirth, sexual matters, and, be it noted, *Jews and Judaism*, as well as his fixation upon veterinary ex-

pressions such as "breeding" and "stud farm" unavoidably strikes us as grotesque.⁶

Kirmmse's Conclusion is that,

Kierkegaard is and remains one of the most important and profound thinkers of modern times, but, however unpleasant, we must look squarely at his statements about Jews and Judaism.⁷

Kirmmse fixes on the 'reflexive' theory by saying that Kierkegaard's "rhetoric" really had nothing to do with Jews or Judaism, but then he spoils the effect by saying that, "There are many kinds of antisemitism." There is 'the antisemitism of tolerance', which I will return to below, and there is 'the neutral solution'. The 'neutral solution' is the co-operative renunciation on the part of the more 'enlightened' Jews of their religion and customs. Both of these attitudes would lead, in time, to the quiet disappearance of both Jews and Judaism. Jews should quietly give up their identity and become either new Christians or atheists. Kirmmse pays Kierkegaard the backhanded compliment of saying that at least he supported neither of these soft solutions. He was, says Kirmmse, outright 'repugnant' in his language, i.e. he was openly anti-Semitic. Hurrah for honesty! But No, one cannot be grateful to the anti-Semite because he does not proselytize.

One cannot praise Kierkegaard for being an open anti-Semite and at the same time exculpate him, saying that his anti-Semitism really had nothing to do with Jews and Judaism.

Kirmmse, like myself, takes most of his evidence from the *Papers*, but argues that the same case could be made just with evidence from the *Works*.⁸

I follow most of Kirmmse's argument, but in my thesis I have taken a different road and reached a darker conclusion. I agree that historically, one could not have expected a multi-cultural, multi-faith solution. This was a time when it was a crime to convert away from the Danish State Church, to, for instance, Catholicism. However, that should not lead one into apologizing for anti-Semitism.

Kierkegaard's first degree was in Theology but his second was in Philosophy. It is therefore inevitable that his writings should straddle the two disciplines. I myself am no theologian and the tools used here are Logic and a sense of human rights, rather than dogma and

the language of Divinity, although the issues are often Biblical. I have referred to Hursthouse, Cohen and Rawls in my treatment of Tolerance. A Jewish perspective has been introduced to show that Kierkegaard's ignorance of Judaism allowed him views which are totally wrong in fact. An example would be his insistence that the Jew, being Mediterranean, can neither control his feelings, nor his voice.⁹

Sifting through all the quotations about Jews, it became clear that they fell into separate groups. Some were of a Biblical nature, others of a social kind and so on. Some had never been presented to the English speaking scholar, which seemed unfair. So, I have translated most of them myself, giving the English reference, where there is one.

Although many good biographies exist about Søren Kierkegaard and much literature about the so-called Golden Age Denmark, none of these could provide the special background that was needed for this thesis. It therefore seemed necessary from the start to devote a few chapters to the Jewish aspects, historically,

both for the country in general and Kierkegaard in particular, introducing a number of contemporaries some of whom were close to Kierkegaard and some not. The emerging picture is far from simple, but it does not confirm the popular idea that 'in those days everyone was an anti-Semite'. Rather, it seems some were and some were not, just like today. However, Kierkegaard's particular background did not encourage religious tolerance.

After the historical chapters, it was necessary to look at definitions of anti-Semitism, or Jew hate, as it was called before the invention of the term 'anti-Semitism'.¹⁰ It has been assumed here that the reader accepts *a priori* that racism, and hereunder anti-Semitism, is wrong and a bad thing. So when Kierkegaard is quoted as saying that all Jews are cowards,¹¹ the reader is not expected to say, 'Well, they might be, mightn't they.' but to put into use the tools provided in Chapter 3. Neither is she expected to nod in agreement when a Christian says, 'But now we are all Christians!' This is not a loving thing to say to a Jew, or anyone else of a different faith. Kirmmse says that

this kind of attitude has been called 'the anti-Semitism of tolerance' and it was prevalent in Golden Age Denmark. This is a simple denial of the identity and difference of the Other. All racisms have general similarities and this is why Black racism has been mentioned, but it is ultimately a very different subject.

Posterity has been very kind to Kierkegaard and he has become a beacon of tolerance to the young generations in twenty-first century academia. This is largely due to his defence of the individual, living often in a world of non-comprehension and indifference. One would not wish to lose that, but is it realistic? What consequences should it have to discover that a moral leader is an anti-Semite? This is the question finally raised in the last chapter.

There have been objections to a subject like this one, in the direction of 'This is biography, not philosophy'. To this I would say with Stuart Brown:

even those who insist on the irrelevance of biographical considerations for the philosopher find themselves tacitly and inconsistently relying on them to give plausibility to their inter-

pretations.¹¹

In other words, one cannot understand a text entirely separate from its historical context, including from its biographical context. Philosophers are people and understanding their times and personal backgrounds helps guard against bias or prejudice and furthers understanding. No one, of course, comes to Kierkegaard a *tabula rasa* and so the philosopher must examine her own background as well and learn to be aware of possible blind spots or lazy animosity.

Elsebeth Wulff

Oxford - 24.9.09

Introduction

NOTES

1. (ed.) Thulstrup, N., *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer* (1968-70), Vols.I-XIII (Vols. XIV-XVI added by Cappelørn, N.J.), Gyldendal, Cph., DK.
For tr. see Hong, H.V. & E.H., *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers* (1978), Vols.1-7, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, U.S.A. (Selection).

(eds.) Heiberg, J.L. & Drachmann, A.B., *Søren Kierkegaards Samlede Værker* (1920-38), Vols.I-XIV, Bianco Luno Press (now by Gyldendal), Cph., DK. (Second edition).
For tr. see Hong, H.V. & E.H., *Kierkegaard's Writings*, *ibid.*

Now also available:

(eds.) Cappelørn, N.J., Garff, J., Kondrup, J. et al. *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*, (1997-) Gad, Cph., DK.

2. Kirmmse, B.H., 'Kierkegaard, Jødedommen og Jøderne' in *Kirkehistoriske Samlinger* (1992) Auning, DK, pp.77-107.

Kirmmse, B.H., 'Kierkegaard, Jews, and Judaism', in *Kierkegardiana* (1994) Cph, DK, pp.83-97.

3. *Ibid.* (1992), p.106.
4. *Ibid.* (1994), p.95.
5. *Ibid.* (1992), p.106.
6. *Ibid.* (1994), p.90.
7. *Ibid.* (1994), p.93.

8. *Ibid.* (1992), pp.98-102 & (1994), p.96, Note 34.
9. See Chapter 4, Note 41.
10. Prager, D. & Telushkin, J., *Why The Jews?* (1983 ... 2003) Touchstone (Simon & Schuster Inc.) New York, NY, USA, 219pp.
Notes p.199:
"1. The term 'anti-Semitism' was coined in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr, an anti-Jewish spokesman in Germany, as a euphemistic substitute for *Judenhass*, Jew-hatred. The term is a misnomer, of course, since it has nothing to do with Semites."
11. Brown, S., *Leibniz and the Scholar Gypsy* (1987) inaugural lecture for Open University professorship, 16pp.

I HISTORICAL

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL SETTING

Søren Kierkegaard (1813-55) lived through a time of great upheaval in Denmark. It was a period of war, disaster, epidemics, state bankruptcy and quiet revolution, but very little of the drama spills over and into his writing. Reading his works and journals, one is entering an interior in Copenhagen, shut off from all the hurly-burly and shaded from the sun.¹ It is a world of the semi-invalid, dependent on diet and regularity, the daily walk. Life is successfully kept at bay through the accident of inherited wealth. Kierkegaard was born to and retained social privilege. Yet, personal loss and worry impacted on this life as on any other. It is as if Kierkegaard balanced himself in the eye of the storm, throughout; one wrong movement and the surge of the masses would have taken him and thrown him hither and thither. One senses a calm that can turn to chaos in an instant. It was 'interesting times' in Denmark and the whole

of Europe, and despite the suffering and the hardship, it sparked off a feverish creativity in the arts and sciences which led to the period being named 'The Golden Age'.

Among the biographies covering the more general and historical aspects of Kierkegaard's life and times are: Bruce Kirmmse's *Søren Kierkegaard's Golden Age Denmark* (1990), dealing especially with the dissolution of the feudal system and the emergence of a more egalitarian society; Alastair Hannay's *Kierkegaard. A Biography* (2001), which is more narrowly focused and deals with the history of the works and the person who wrote them; and finally Joakim Garff's *SAK* (2000) which has a popular approach and a great deal of humour, including some history and social background, but also going through the authorship and the personal circumstances which inspired it.² Although it is important to keep the general history and biography in mind, the aim here is to outline the part of the background which has a Jewish relevance and which will therefore serve as a social and historical foil for this analysis. In this way, the three very detailed biographies

above can be added to, rather than repeated.

Before looking into Kierkegaard's personal background, it will be necessary to briefly consider the world and time in which he lived, from the specific point of view of Jewish culture in Denmark and the absence or presence of anti-Semitism there. Below, will therefore follow comments on the so-called Jew-feud (1819), the general conditions in Europe of Jews, the Napoleonic wars and their repercussions, Denmark saved by a Jew, specific conditions in Scandinavia and a few historical facts about Danish Jews. Finally, some of Kierkegaard's contemporaries will be presented, again with special attention paid to their attitude to, and thoughts about, Jews. In the next chapter, further personalities will appear, but with a direct relationship to Søren Kierkegaard.

To say that everyone at the time in Denmark was either a Jew or an anti-Semite would be facile and inaccurate. On the other hand, there were reported incidents of anti-Semitism, maybe as a backlash to increasingly Jew-friendly laws and a general trend towards *liberté, égalité*,

fraternité. The picture is complex but there are no examples of blatant, institutional anti-Semitism, as one can find in other European countries at that time. The most dramatic expression of Danish anti-Semitism dates back to 1819, at which time Kierkegaard was 6 years old. It was named 'The Jew-feud' [*Jødefejden*] and according to contemporary descriptions, it must have been like a *Kristallnacht*, with smashed shop front windows and looting. It was nationwide.

'The Jew-feud'

The name may be unfortunate since a 'feud' [*en fejde*] implies mutual hostility of a longer duration, but there are no examples of Jews actually attacking their hosts; on the contrary. The violence cannot have lasted long and it was swiftly condemned from the pulpits. The later Primate of the Danish Church, Dr Jakob Mynster, preached over a very apposite text, Chapter 5 of Paul's Letter to the Galatians. It was Sunday after Trinity and sheer coincidence, that this was the prescribed text. Mynster took the opportunity to admonish anyone who took part in

the scenes that left the capital as if after a war:

who can forget it...sad, upsetting, despicable sight, as he went about our city, which no enemy force had attacked, and yet everywhere he saw the traces of destruction, as if enemies had been ravaging?³

Mynster talks about "many days" of chaos in the streets, but the emphasis of his sermon is on the positive and the future. He asks rhetorically: "And were the others then not human beings like yourselves?", then sums up his own attitude, namely:

I have a heart to despise all that is bad, unworthy and wicked, whether it takes the shape of pompous vanity that wants to draw everyone's eyes to itself, or it lurks about in the hidden, whether it is in Jew or Christian: but I have known many a one...among those who do not share our faith, who by righteousness, by true compassion earned the esteem of everyone who appreciates that which is honourable.⁴

This was the attitude one would have expected to find in the Danish Church and no further violence occurred.

General Conditions in Europe for Jews

It is necessary to put this one incident into a European context, for Denmark did not exist in a vacuum and there were close connections with Germany, which was seen as culturally and academically superior and to which scholars, artists and writers would travel in order to imbibe sophistication, even at a time when Denmark was at war with Germany over her southern border. Jacob Katz gives this quick demographic summary:

According to the accepted demographic estimate there were about two and a half million Jews at the end of the eighteenth century. At the end of the nineteenth century there were about ten and a half million - a rate of increase which in percentage exceeds for this period all other European peoples₅

and,

...
out of eight million Jews in Europe, five million lived in Russia₆

He explains the change into the more recent position thus:

Of the two and a half million at the end of the eighteenth century, one million, or 40%, were made up of Jews in the Orient (in the large Turkish Empire and North Africa). Of the remainder, a million and a half lived in East and Central Europe. The number of Jews in over-

seas countries was insignificant. This picture, however, is entirely changed by the end of the century. Whereas the number of Oriental Jews remained about the same, European Jewry constituted about 80% as the result of their rapid natural increase. The remaining million, or 10%, lived in America, to which country during the second half of the century, particularly since 1880, the first waves of Jewish mass immigration were directed.⁷

If 10% is equal to one million, then, of course, 80% equals eight million, which fits with a total of ten, or ten and a half, million. These are amazing figures, a veritable population explosion! It naturally resulted in an over-spill towards America and perhaps also northwards towards the Scandinavian countries. In Germany, one saw a clear backlash, as described by Michael Meyer (1967):

in June of 1822 Jews were excluded from the higher ranks of the army; and on March 11, 1823 the government declared that the Jewish religion was only 'tolerated'. But what hurt the young intellectuals of the *Verein* [magazine] most was the decision made on August 18, 1822 and announced on December 4th of that year which explicitly denied public academic posts to Jews. The relevant provision of the emancipation edict of March 11th, 1812 was rescinded 'because of the incongruities involved in carrying it out'.⁸

Such negations of Jewish emancipation are mentioned elsewhere as well and they could be

aimed at particular persons as one sees in connection with Hegel's biography.⁹

In England, emancipation was also liable to denial or manipulation. Jacob Katz describes how:

Essential deviation from the current pattern was to be found in England. Although the legal status of Jews admitted since Cromwell's time remained unclarified, permission to stay meant freedom to live in any part of the country. True, a Jew who emigrated from abroad remained an alien, but one born in the country was a British subject. Political and occupational disabilities he had to put up with were the result of the constitutionally enacted laws of the country, which limited certain offices to members of the Anglican church. These restrictions were not aimed against Jews but against non-Anglican Christians so that the Jew had no reason for feeling discriminated against.¹⁰

As will be shown shortly, this was also the Danish strategy; everyone who did not belong to the national church failed to qualify for inclusion, rather than was excluded, and no particular group was singled out. This might invalidate any accusations of anti-Semitism, but not necessarily. In any case, it is hardly more

fair to exclude all minority groups, rather than only one. In fact, one might even argue that it is better to exclude only one group, as opposed to ten. In a Utilitarian argument numbers matter. Despite this 'blanket exclusion', the restrictions hit every person in a most specific way, as will illustrate the example of Baron Lionel de Rothschild, of the famous Jewish dynasty. Katz tells the story:

The City of London elected Baron Lionel de Rothschild to Parliament as early as 1847 and he duly appeared to take his oath, believing that he would be allowed to take it in a way that would not conflict with his Jewish faith. As Parliament, however, insisted on retaining the Christian formula, Rothschild had to leave the House...Parliament was finally inclined to change the formula but the change depended on the consent of the House of Lords. This being the stronghold of the conservative element, it vetoed Parliament's decision until 1858 when it compromised, allowing a change in formula for the Commons but retaining the old formula for the House of Lords. This was the year when the first Jew, Lionel Rothschild, entered Parliament. In 1866 the impediment was also removed in the House of Lords.¹¹

This is an example of indirect discrimination. There is a fair election but then a demand for

an oath that can only be sworn by Christians. One also has to remember that there were few religious groups of a non-Christian persuasion, apart from Jews, at that point in European history. There are not many stories about Hindus or Muslims living in Denmark at that time! A parallel strategy can be found in the Danish demand for a certificate, not of birth, but of baptism before entering into certain employments. In theory anyone can enter, the law says so, but in practice, a Jew would have to convert in order to get such a certificate. (The special Danish conditions will be returned to later in this chapter.)

The Napoleonic Wars and Their Repercussions

The Napoleonic Wars divided Europe up into two groups; those who were for Napoleon and those who were against. Kirmmse describes the situation as one in which Denmark tried to stay neutral between England and France.¹² While Watkin and Hong summarize thus:

Besides the Copenhagen fires of 1794 and 1795 - there was an unwilling involvement in the Napoleonic Wars with the loss of the fleet and the bombardment of Copenhagen by the English in

1807.¹²

This led to the state bankruptcy in 1813 and loss of Norway in 1814. The Danish King Frederik VI was neither 'neutral' nor 'unwilling' when it came to Napoleon. Certainly, the ideological push towards greater *égalité* was unstoppable in the people. As Kirmmse states:

Denmark was the only country in Europe to retain permanently the revolutionary changes experienced by so many in 1848.¹⁴

The 'Jew Feud' was thought to have come rolling up from Germany which was deeply divided within itself.¹⁵ At times of political upheaval and financial crisis, minority groups are often victimized and marginalized. The Danish poor were rising from a condition of absolutist control which among others entailed forced Church attendance every Sunday. This obligation fell away in the early nineteenth century, first in the cities and last in the countryside.¹⁶

Not all Jews were poor refugees in the first half of the nineteenth century. There were well-established families, almost 'dynasties', in the European capitals. In Copenhagen, there were names such as Melchior and Henriques. They had made their fortunes in

banking and business and now patronized the arts. One person was a Member of the Danish Government [*Rigsdagen*].¹⁷ They lived in manor houses and kept many servants. In London Rothschild, mentioned above, stepped in when the loan Denmark had obtained, from a firm called Wilson, after the state bankruptcy could no longer be sustained, as Wilson itself went into bankruptcy. Rothschild took over the bonds in 1825, causing 'a hue and cry in Copenhagen newspapers'. A big meeting was held and people would buy or borrow bonds in order to get to participate in the crisis meeting about the acceptability of a Jew having the honour of rescuing the Danish state. They did not in fact have a choice.¹⁸

Scandinavia

There were few Jews settled in Scandinavia in the first half of the nineteenth century. Up until 1776, there were no Jews in Sweden and laws were in place after that date to ensure that as few as possible entered. Norway was under Danish rule until 1814 when Norway by default carried on with a legislation that had

become obsolete in Denmark; namely, that Jews could not enter the country except with a visa that only lasted a few days, after which they had to leave. This law appeared in the Constitution as an end note, "§2":

"The evangelic Lutheran religion remains the official religion of the state. Those inhabitants who profess to it are obliged to bring up their children in the same. Jesuits and monastic orders must not be tolerated. *Jews are, as before, excluded from entry into the kingdom.*"¹⁹

However, the Danish legislation was not much better for Jews, in that only rich Jews could get a permit to settle. These included Portuguese Jews, who were thought to be inherently rich and resourceful. On 29th March 1814, however, German Jews were given the same rights. But even so, the individual Jew had to obtain specific permission to stay for more than 14 days. Heads of counties had the authority to issue a licence to stay for 6 months and often they gave permission to stay for several years. Compared with conditions in other countries further south, these were tolerable restrictions. Jews were not told to live in certain streets or wear distinguishing clothing or signs, nor did they pay extra tax. Jews were

not directly forced to undergo baptism, although the lack of a certificate of baptism, as mentioned above, was a serious handicap. In Denmark, as in England, certain professions required the newcomer to swear an oath, which was Christian in nature. Judges were one such group. Jews could join the army and from 2nd April 1801, they were conscripted like everyone else. Jews could be doctors and from 1798, they could also enter the academy for surgeons, as well as go to University. Jews born on Danish soil or in possession of a special permission could buy land. Permission was given to establish prayerhouses in 12 towns. 'In principle, Jews were granted complete civic rights' from 1814, but there could be difficulties in its realization. At this time, it was estimated that there were 4064 Jews living in Denmark, with more than half living in the capital.²⁰ With a Danish population in the city of more than 100,000, half of 4000 would constitute 2%, or one Jew to every 50 Danes, or 'to every non-Jewish Dane', to be correct. Today, the Jewish population is only between 7-9 thousand, while the Muslim group constitutes 180,000. Given that the whole population today

(2006) is 6 million, the Muslims make up 3% and the Jews little over 1%. However, in Kierkegaard's Copenhagen, 'Patrician' Jews had an influence out of proportion to their numbers, through banking but also through the media.²⁰ Most of the large daily newspapers were edited or part-owned by Jews. Among criminals they were under-achievers, as the Norwegian writer and theologian, Henrik Wergeland, points out. He refers to:

a written declaration by the former Vice-governor [*Understatholder*] Wannquist, that in the 28 years, he had worked as Chief of Police in Stockholm, *no Jew has been indicted for murder, theft, marriage break-up, or drunkenness.*"²²

On the whole, it was found that 'immorality and crime were very rare among the Jews'.

Henrik Wergeland is best known in Scandinavia as a poet. He died young, but was a prolific writer and so has left a substantial body of works. The quality of his poetry varies, but the best is very fine and much loved. He involved himself in social and political matters and as a theologian saw it as his task to press the government to remove the

"§2" from the constitution. He wrote a series of poems about Jews and their plight as well as a booklet with factual information about Jewish beliefs and history. However, when the matter went to the vote in the Norwegian parliament [*Stortinget*] in 1841, it was rejected and only in 1851 (6 years after Wergeland's death) was the clause finally removed from the Norwegian Constitution.²³ Norway remains to this day the Scandinavian country with the smallest proportion of Jews.²⁴

Danish Jews

According to information published by the Danish main Synagogue in Copenhagen, there have been Jews living in Denmark for the last 300 years. The first Jewish prayer house was opened in Copenhagen in 1684 and the first Jewish cemetery was established in 1693, also in Copenhagen. During the British bombardment of Copenhagen in 1807, the holy scrolls were saved. In 1814, "The Danish King issued a decree granting all Jews in Denmark civic rights and duties as Danish citizens".²⁵ A new, purpose-built Synagogue was opened in Copenhagen in 1833,

under the Chief Rabbi, imported from Germany, Abraham Alexander Wolff (in office from 1828 until his death in 1891, aged 90). It was decreed that the front wall of the building should be standing back from the pavement and not be in line with the other houses in the street, so as not to attract unwanted attention and not look too imposing. The planning permission was controversial. This was after all a Jewish house of God.²⁶ It would take another hundred years before the monarch deigned to visit. King Christian X visited in 1933, the year Hitler came into power, during the centenary celebrations and participated in the service.

Abraham Alexander Wolff, '*Hr. Doctor*', had to use all his diplomatic skills to keep the trust of both the Jewish congregation and the Danish government and on one occasion, in connection with his Danish knighthood, it was thought on the Jewish side that he had gone too far to the other side and needed reminding of where he truly belonged. '*Ridder af Dannebrog*' [Knight of the Danish Flag] is the highest honour in Denmark, but it had perhaps erroneously been bestowed upon the Chief Rabbi

because it had conditions attached, quite apart from its design in the shape of a cross:

"The statutes of the order stipulated that those inducted into the order must be adherents of the evangelical Christian religion."²⁷

On 24th April 1855, a group of leading Jews put an article in the daily newspaper, *Adresseavisen*, which was the main Copenhagen organ for public declarations and useful information, such as births, weddings and deaths. The group was chaired by a Mr Joseph Perlstein and the rest were called 'and others'. The hurt to the community is thoroughly and seriously explained and phrased as an open letter to the Chief Rabbi in the formal and respectful third person singular. It would seem that Chief Rabbi Wolff wore his order on special Jewish occasions such as weddings and funerals, while taking it off in a sideroom before entering the sanctuary, the Synagogue itself, as if himself aware of its dubious nature and value in that place. Since the cross symbolized the Messiah who was not acceptable to Jews and the suffering said to have been inflicted by Jews, it was totally synonymous with Christianity and

could not be worn by anyone who was not a Christian. As a wearer of the order, he was implicitly promising to defend 'the evangelical religion and duty-bound to stand up for the servants of the word of God'. Any Jew wearing a cross would be considered lost to Judaism and such a person could be excluded from the Synagogue, if after due warning he did not remove the offending ornament. The Chief Rabbi had only two options: he could humbly ask to be exempted from the order, i.e. return it, or he could cease to be a Jew. What is the rule for the common member of the community, would apply even more severely to a 'teacher' [*rabbi* in Hebrew] of the community. He would be shunned by leaders of other Jewish communities and every other community would exclude such a teacher. Perhaps the ornament could be viewed as a secular adornment, but its origins were religious. *Hr. Doctor Wolff* is to be considered more a Christian than a Jew and therefore cannot continue in his office. If he does not leave voluntarily, steps will be taken to have him removed. - This is a public warning to the Chief Rabbi. Whether Mr Perlstein et al. were a sufficiently powerful group to unsettle their

leader, or whether the Chief Rabbi took the hint and stopped wearing the cross is not clear. It would have been *lèse-majesté* to return the order.²⁸

It is indicative of how far Jews had got in Denmark, when such a discussion could take place in public, when Jews were prepared to step into the common arena with a 'private' Jewish concern and even threaten their own leader, indeed when an order could be awarded a Jew directly from the King. One thing is certain, the Chief Rabbi stayed in the seat for another 36 years. It is a truism to say that it is best for Judaism if there is some outside pressure. Total emancipation will lead to assimilation and loss of identity. That is how Jewish elders view it. In Kierkegaard's day, such acceptance by the host country was new, but it was also tenuous. The fear of loss of identity was balanced by a residual hostility in the population and a sentimental misinterpretation of Jewish feeling and religion. As usual, history is deduced from the writings of people who had the leisure and the money to express themselves thus. Unless there is a political unrest, like the 'Jew-feud',

which can be written about by the educated classes, the stories of the poor or the lower middle classes are not in general preserved. However, this deficiency is no reason to discard whatever is available. In the section below, the views of some of the luminaries of the first half of the nineteenth century will be shown. In Chapter 2, will appear those people who had a direct contact with Kierkegaard and who were decisive in the formation of his anti-Jewish feelings.

Some Contemporaries

When one says that x or z was 'anti-Semitic' and this person belonged to another era, the most typical reaction is: 'But everyone was an anti-Semite (I use the word 'anti-Semitic' interchangeably with 'anti-Jewish'. The words 'Semite' or 'anti-Semite' do not appear in the Molbech Danish/Danish dictionary of 1859, so anti-'Jewish' might be more in conformity with the language of early 19th century Denmark.) at that time!' To this can be said that, 1) it is doubtful that 'everyone' ever was anti-Semitic anywhere at any one time, 2) prejudice is hardly

justified because 'many' are prejudiced, as opposed to 'few', 3) anti-Semitism is anti-Semitism. It does not acquire a different name because many are anti-Semites. Anti-Semitism does not become 'all right' because everyone is an anti-Semite, were this possible. By Kierkegaard's own standards, the individual is always responsible for him- or herself and no wrong is right because 'everyone did it'.

Another reaction is: 'But he hated everyone who was not like himself!' One can counter that argument by saying that if a person hates everyone who is not a Christian, that would include Jews and anti-Semitism would be part of that Hatred. Strictly speaking, hatred of Muslims would also be 'anti-Semitism' as the *Koran* is written in Arabic, which is a Semitic language. Unfortunately, history has firmly linked the word 'Semite' with Jews and Judaism and it is unlikely ever to comprehend Muslims as well. (See Chapter 3 below for 'definitions').

Already, Mynster has been mentioned, in his role as parish priest reminding his flock of their duties towards Jews, or anyone different.

Wergeland has been mentioned and will be returned to later in the Chapter. Another cleric, who was to leave a legacy greater than Mynster's, was Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872). For him, religion was closely connected with nationalism. Like Wergeland, he was prolific as a writer and rhymed verses came pouring from him. It was not always his own ideas, many of his hymns and songs are handed-down ballads and myths and older Christian material which he reworked. Many people were initially drawn to his special version of Danish Protestantism, only to turn away a little later. Others made a lifelong commitment to this folksy, jolly Christianity and Søren Kierkegaard's brother, Peter Christian Kierkegaard, was one of these. Although both Søren Kierkegaard and Grundtvig wanted to see Church and State separated, Søren found the combination of nationalism and Christianity ludicrous.²⁹ Neither interpretation of Christianity was helpful from a Jewish point of view. Grundtvig's emphasis on Nordic mythology and love for the Danish landscape was hardly inclusive when it came to other religions or other identities. Often he took Jewish symbols

and names and moulded them into a Christian shape:

Jew-land's apostle crowd!
What in this world can explain
the strength of the ancient word,
Which still works miracles, and
has for proud memorials
churches all round the world!³⁰

Nationalism is indirectly exclusive, on the other hand. One would not expect a country to strip itself of all cultural expression for the sake of all-inclusiveness. One does spot in several places Grundtvig's wish to move the geographical centre of Christianity from Palestine and place it in Denmark, for Danish consumption. Therefore, the often bizarre combinations of Christ and pre-Christian Nordic Gods.

Kierkegaard took a different route. He rejected the idea of nationalism within religion and that became one of his criticisms of Judaism, that it centred around an idea of nationhood and therefore, in his eyes, became a materialistic, unspiritual faith. Kierkegaard thought the Church should be completely independent of the State and its secular considerations. He also thought Christianity was for the individual and not the group, again

a point made against Judaism, that it addressed the dynasty, the tribe, the family. Kierkegaard's understanding of Judaism was not always correct, but these are the points he made.

There is no assumption here either, that Jews entirely understand Christianity. Misunderstandings are rife on either side. A rabbi told his congregation last year that, "We, Jews, do not believe in a god who could kill his own son!" Kierkegaard would say that, 'Abraham and Isaac were just a trial-run. For us, God sacrificed his only son!' When first premises differ, what Kierkegaard calls 'the categories', Good becomes Bad and vice versa.

Johan Ludvig Heiberg (1791-1860) was probably the king of taste in Copenhagen and his salon the most sought after. One would not find much in his *Poetic* or *Prosaic Writings* about Jews or Judaism (one example being his vaudeville, *Kong Salomin og Jørgen Hattemager* [King Solomon and George Hatter] (1825),³¹ or religion. His Church was the Theatre. For the purposes of this thesis, he is still an

important figure because he married a woman whose mother was German-Jewish and whose father was German. This would make her Jewish according to Jewish Law, which says that 'a Jew is a person born to a Jewish mother, or who has been converted by a Jewish Court', and 50% Jewish in a secular, Gentile sense. She looked dark and foreign and as an actress, she was adored by the Danish audience. Perhaps it helped that her father was a Catholic and she had no Jewish upbringing. Certainly, as will be further elaborated on in the next Chapter, Kierkegaard never mentioned the fact, and especially not in his praise of Johanne Luise Heiberg in his *The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress*.³² That is of course not tantamount to 'tolerance' or 'equality'. Denial of one's identity and origin and a pretence that one is other than one is, is in fact a kind of elimination. However, as an artist, she was Culture. What her husband wrote and she acted was Denmark's culture in the making.

Bernhard Severin Ingemann (1789-1862) became an early, although not personal, influence on the 20-year old Kierkegaard. He

Every morning answers in my soul my
Magistrate:
'I go, but you until I come must wait!'

34

It is typical of this seeming philo-Semitism, that a secret longing for Christ is assumed. Such was the ignorance about Judaism, that it was thought that all that divided Jew from Christian was the Christian's understanding that Jesus was the Messiah and the Jew's only needing to be convinced, then there could be unity of Jew and Gentile, Old and New Testament. It must have seemed tantalizingly close. However, it was in reality a sentimental, cloying, insidious type of anti-Semitism, a total denial, for instance, of the nascent Jewish quest for nationhood, belief in the Law (deduced from the *Books of Moses*), adherence to the Hebrew language, combined with rejection of the Holy Communion, the image of God and the idea of the Devil. There were many more issues that could not be ironed out. Jews were not keen either to educate the Christians and communications always happened on Christian premises.

Ingemann's verses constitute the heart of a German so-called 'folk tale', which had been published as far back as 1668 in Jena. Kierke-

gaard bought the Ingemann version in 1836 and he refers to Ludwig Aurbacher's *Ein Volksbüchlein* which came out in 1835, that is, two years after Ingemann's book was first published.³⁵ Much of Kierkegaard's *Journals*, Vol.I is taken up with ponderings on this topic, the cast-out, homeless, lonely Jew, estranged even from other Jews. Ingemann's poem ends with the wanderer opening his heart to the voice of the true God and with that his restlessness is over and bliss awaits him.

Hans Christian Andersen (1805-75) wrote about Jews in much the same vein. In his short-story, *Jødepigen* [The Jew-girl],³⁶ Andersen has produced a picture of a girl, later a woman, who has become trapped within an inherited identity which seems to have held little content. According to the wish of her dying mother, that she stay Jewish, she is removed from a Christian school because it is realized that she is attracted to Christianity. However, it is not possible to keep Christianity from her, she works for a Christian family as a maid and her loyalty is endless. When the Mistress falls ill, she is asked to read to her from the Old

and the New Testament. The result is that she falls ill from the nervous strain and dies. She is buried outside the wall of the cemetery, i.e. in un-consecrated earth, because she is not Christian. The last paragraph is filled with pathos:

And God's sun, which shone across the graves of the Christians, also shone across the grave of the Jew-girl there, outside; and the singing of psalms, which could be heard in the cemetery of the Christians, rang out over her grave. The preaching reached out there too: 'There is a rising up in *Christo!* He, the Lord, who said to his disciples: 'John, it is true, baptized with water, but you are to be baptized with the Holy Ghost!'³⁷

In fact, the Jew is as good as converted and thus saved by the angels. Such an ending has the advantage of not upsetting anyone, because there was no real conversion, which Jews would not have liked and Christians might have questioned. Still, there was salvation. She was buried outside of the wall, but no wall could keep from her God's sun, or the singing of psalms and the preaching of the words of Christ.

Andersen wrote no other stories about a Jew. However, in his novels, he has included

several strong Jewish types (one cannot call them 'characters'). These types are old wise men or young beautiful women. Thus in *Improvisatoren* [The Improvisor], a young Jewish woman appears to be an adoptive daughter. The young male narrator promptly falls in love with her and surprises himself, for how could he be attracted to a Jewish girl! He does not have long to worry, for it turns out that the girl is not Jewish, but Catholic, i.e. Christian. Her Oriental looks are simply Mediterranean. Biologically, she is Spanish, although brought up in Italy, All is well!³⁷

In Andersen's other novel, *Kun en Spillemand* [Only a Fiddler] - reviewed by Kierkegaard (See Chapter 2) - the Jewish theme is more sympathetic and the Jewish beauty is allowed a powerful and heroic role, to the extent where she almost usurps the main character, the gifted violinist. Although her grandfather, the wise old man, conforms with the Jewish stereotype, she does not. If anything, she is a new Jewish type. The reader's credulity is somewhat tested when Andersen lets her go to the Circus where she performs with daring and elegance. In a

memorable scene, the two young people set up a *rendez-vous* in a forest at night-time. He is too timid to make it. It is dark and wet out and he has no idea as to how to get there. She, on the other hand, dresses up as a man and rides on horseback through the night and the rain, only to find that her lover did not show up. The Jewishness here serves to make the character wild and exotic. The woman is herself breaking with her own Jewishness and the aura of mystery refers back to a kind of Orientalism, rather than Judaism.³⁹

Andersen had close relations with two wealthy Jewish families in Copenhagen, the Melchiors and the Henriqueses. He was a frequent visitor at their country homes and here he would entertain children and adults alike, masters and staff. These families were Synagogue attenders but there is no evidence that their way of life was otherwise very Orthodox. The deep understanding of Jewish life and thought, as shown, for instance, in George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* is matched nowhere in Danish literature, unless the author was Jewish, but then Eliot wrote her masterpiece in the mid-

seventies and by then Jewish emancipation had been consolidated, as the Rothschild case (above) also illustrates.⁴⁰ Conditions had become so relaxed for Jews, even at Copenhagen University in the seventies, that a Jewish lecturer in European literature could get away with statements like these:

The person who steps into the new Church, has a heart full of agony,...it is then about filling his soul with the picture of the Saviour, of the suffering Christ writhing on his cross, of all the flayed, torn-asunder and roasted [ristede] martyrs. These pictures meet him in the church. They do not fit with the full and happy light of the sun, therefore the entire interior of the church has been barricaded against the rays of the sun and is like life itself full of darkness and of shadows.

...

The shape of a cross of the church is already symbolic, one wanders about inside the hollow torture tool.⁴¹

Brandes also delivers a counter-blast to Kierkegaard's *Moments* of 1855:

The passionate and violent attack, which was done by S. Kierkegaard in his last period on the so-called Christian art, was natural for a man who, like Kierkegaard, was devoid of all artistic cultivation.⁴²

This is a Jew speaking to a student audience with the greatest of freedoms. There is no fear

of losing his job, even when he is criticizing Christianity. Perhaps his audience was aware that he was just as critical of Judaism and the Old Testament.

When Hans Christian Andersen became too ill to leave his rented rooms in the city centre, it was two Jewish women who saw to it that he would not miss Christmas, as that was the time of year:

and when Mrs Melchior on Christmas Eve surprised him by having laid a festive table for him in his front room in *Nyhavn* [New Harbour] with beautiful presents, opened the door, so that the Christmas candles shone towards him, he burst into tears.⁴³

He was in the end looked after in the home of Mrs Melchior and it was here he died, at the villa called *Rolighed* [calm], on 4th August 1875. It does seem, however, that these large Jewish families did celebrate Christmas in its Pagan aspects, maybe to please the servants and to 'pass' with their friends on the outside. It is significant, though, that marriage happened within the small Jewish community, to the extent where it was acceptable that an uncle married his niece of 19 years old, i.e. the girl married her father's brother and so became her

mother's sister-in-law. The extreme conformity to Danish customs in outward matters is confirmed in the journal, *Dansk Jødisk Historie* [Danish Jewish History]⁴³:

It is difficult to describe the Danish Jews photographically. The reason is simple: in the course of the 1800s they had become so assimilated into the Danish Society that they hardly differentiated themselves at the end of the 1800s. The expression is often used about the German Jews, that they were more German than the Germans. The same words could be applied to the Danish Jews. In particular the upper classes among the Danish Jews had to a high degree around the change of the century abandoned the traditional Jewish garments and traditional presentation (as for instance beard and so on), that they in the purely physical sense could rarely be singled out among the Danes.⁴⁵

To sum up, it is hard to find an example of a leading Dane in any field of work who can be cited for anti-Semitism. There are many examples of a sugary sentimental compassion for Jews, who are assumed to be ripe for conversion into Christianity at the drop of a hat. Many Jews today would claim that this is the worst kind of anti-Semitism and one would prefer open hostility to that. For the purposes of this thesis, outright anti-Semitism in the early half of the 19th century is rare and so the claim

that 'everyone was an anti-Semite' in Kierkegaard's day still needs to be proved correct and until it is, one must assume that anti-Semitism was not common. In Kierkegaard's own terms, that is an argument of no significance anyway, since every individual is totally responsible and if 'they all did it', that does not diminish the moral responsibility. It is neither here nor there.

There was certainly much misunderstanding and ignorance about Judaism and even a friend as stalwart as Henrik Wergeland could write:

Let the mildness of Jesus Christ reveal itself to his unhappy compatriots...and finally they will realize...that Messiah arrived a long time ago...The gap between Christians and Jews, which in the main was but a difference of opinion about the messianic prophecies being fulfilled or not, will...again fill in and diminish until it disappears⁴⁶

Wergeland tries to counter common criticisms of Jews, saying:

Their family life should, in all other ways than cleanliness, be irreproachable, and their brotherly commitment to each other exemplary.⁴⁷

"In all other ways than cleanliness!" One could

say that 'with friends like that, who needs enemies'! Few Jews would be pleased to hear it said about them that:

The Jews were no doubt once a nation; but *as such, they perished* nearly 2000 years ago.⁴⁸

All the same, Wergeland was perceived as a friend of the Jews and a monument was erected in his honour in 1849, funded by grateful Jews living outside of Norway. Its inscription calls him: "Henrik Wergeland, the indefatigable advocate of freedom and justice for humanity and all citizens". It goes on to say that: "Grateful Jews outside the borders of Norway erected this monument to him." "Outside" was among others, of course, Denmark. However, it was not until 1850 in Denmark and 1851 in Norway that Jews could freely enter.⁴⁹

It was one thing to allow Jews to build and run schools for Jewish children, quite another to let Jews enter University and it would seem that a silent resistance reigned there and perhaps especially at the Faculty of Theology, from which advice and guidance was sought on the subject. This area is particularly apt with regard to the next Chapter, which will treat

Kierkegaard and the people directly connected with him in a more personal, biographical way.

Although Jews had received equal rights in the law of 27th March 1814, it was only 'in principle'. Its implementation took much longer. The need for an oath was under the regulation of the Copenhagen Faculty of Theology and attempts to re-word the oath, so as to suit people of all persuasions, were resisted.⁵⁰

Wergeland writes:

It is a most interesting fact that while only 17 Jews from the whole country graduated from Copenhagen University during the 18 years, 1799-1816, no less than 70 graduated during the 23 years, 1817-1839, and of these, 6 received Firsts, 41 received Best, 20 Seconds and only 3 lowest marks. However, this becomes all the more interesting when one recalls how disproportionately difficult and restricted the access to promotion still remained for them, so that one simply cannot say that it is advantage which has lured them.⁵¹

Still, he can mention two theologians among distinguished Danish Jews, Manheimer and Kalkar. The evidence does point towards the idea that possibly anti-Semitism by way of omission, passive resistance, was concentrated in academic circles. In other words, if there was anti-Semitism, it would be found precisely in Kierke-

gaard's circles. Of course, an average of 70 in 23 years only makes 3 per year, and that is against 1 a year. One cannot be impressed by that.

Chapter 1

NOTES

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2. Garff, J., *Ibid.*
Hannay, A., *Kierkegaard : A Biography* (2001), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K., 441 pp.
Kirmmse, B., *Søren Kierkegaard's Golden Age Denmark* (1990), Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, U.S., 520 pp.
3. Mynster, J.P., *Kirkelige Leiligheds-Taler* [Ecclesiastical Occasional Discourses] (1854), Reitzel, Copenhagen, DK, pp.225-34. Sermon no.15, pp.226-7. (I owe this reference to George Pattison). Mynster was Primate from 1834 to 1854.
4. *Ibid.*, p.233.
5. Katz, J., *Emancipation and Assimilation, Studies in Modern Jewish History* (1972), Gregg International Publ. Ltd., U.K., 293pp. (I owe this reference to Peter Pulzer), p.2.
Katz refers here to: "Rupin, A. *Soziologie der Juden* (1930), Berlin, Vol.I, pp.67-100, and *The Jews in the Modern World* (1934), pp.21-30".
6. *Ibid.*, p.3.
7. *Ibid.*, p.2.
8. Meyer, M.A., *The Origins of the Modern Jew* (1967), Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, U.S., p.178. (I owe this reference to Peter Pulzer.)

9. See Chapter 3, Note 32.
10. Katz, J., *Out of the Ghetto* (1973), Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S. "- The social background of Jewish Emancipation 1770-1870", p.12.
11. *Ibid.*, p.196.
12. Kirmmse, *Ibid.*, p.21.
13. Hong, H. & E. (eds.) *Kierkegaard's Writings* [KW] (1990) - with Julia Watkin - Princeton University Press, Princeton, U.S., Vols. I-XXVI, Vol. I, *Polemical Writings*, p.x.
14. Kirmmse, *Ibid.*, p.12.
15. Borup, M. (ed.+intro) Goldschmidt, M.A. *Livs Erindringer og Resultater* [A Life's Recollections and Results] (1877...1965), Rosenkilde og Bagger, Copenhagen, DK, p.324 (Vol. I), p.241 (Vol. II), p.48, Note 36.
Borup refers the reader to: Davidsen, Jac., *Fra det gamle Kongens København* [From the King's Old Copenhagen] (1883), pp.329 ff.
16. Kirmmse, *Ibid.*, p.27.
17. Kjølbbye, B. *H.C. Andersen og Veninderne*, [H.C. Andersen and the Female Friends] (1997), Chr. Ejlers Forlag, Copenhagen, DK, 315 pp. P.251.
18. Hong, *Ibid.*, Vol. XII, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Book 1, p.612, Book 2, p.270, Note 859.
19. Wergeland, H. *Indlæg i Jødesagen til Understøttelse for Forslaget om Ophævelse af Norges Grundlovs §2, Sidste Passus* [Contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question in Support of the Cancellation of Norway's Constitution's §2, Last Paragraph] (1841), publ. by Henrik Wergeland, Kristiania (now Oslo), Norway, 98 pp. P.1. Wergeland's emphasis.
20. *Ibid.*, - See also Cohen, A.D. *De mosaiske Troesbekjenderes Stilling i Danmark forhen og nu* [The Position of the Professors of the Mosaic Faith in Denmark Before and Now] (1837), author's publ., Odense, DK.

21. Goldschmidt, M.A. (ed. Borup, M.) *Ibid.*, p.305 and p.129. *KWI*, *Ibid.*, p.236. *Berlingske Tidende* [Berling's Times] (Mendel Levin Nathanson, 1780-1868, Editor).
Fædrelandet [The Fatherland] (Abraham Wessely, 1800-75, Founding Member & Economics Advisor).
Flyveposten [The Flying Post] (Jacob Gabriel Davidsen, 1813-80, Editor).
Kjøbenhavnsposten [The Copenhagen Post] (J.P.M. Grüne, 1805-78, Editor. -German, not Jewish origins).

KWI, *Ibid.*, p.236. *KWXXIII*, p.641.
22. Wergeland, *Ibid.*, p.82. Wergeland's emphasis.
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24. Norway had approximately 750 Jews in 1967. See *Atlas of Israel* (1970) Elsevier, Amsterdam, p.x/3.
25. Copenhagen's Main Synagogue, Information Leaflet: *Your Jewish Key to Denmark* (1996-2001).
26. Copenhagen's Main Synagogue, Information Leaflet: *Kære Besøgende* [Dear Visitor] (1996-2001).
27. Hong, *KWXXIII*, p.628, Note 110. *The Moment*. For the Danish text see:
Heiberg, J.L. & Drachmann, A.B.(eds.) *Søren Kierkegaards Samlede Værker* [Søren Kierkegaard's Collected Works] (1920-38), Vols.I-XIV, 2nd ed. [Henceforth SV]. P.67 of Vol.XIV *Øieblikket* [The Moment].

See also *KWXXIII*, p.58.
28. *Adresseavisen*, No.94, 24th April 1855. (Courtesy of The Royal Library, Copenhagen, DK).
29. Cedergreen Bech, Sv.(ed.), *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon* (founded 1887 by C.F. Bricka) (1980), Gyldendal, Copenhagen, DK, 16 Vols.

Garff, *Ibid.*, p.30: "as an opponent of rationalism, he wanted himself to free himself from the State Church and from his own congregation".

30. *Folkehøjskolens Sangbog* [The Folk High-school's Songbook] (1894...1999), *Foreningen for Folkehøjskoler i Danmark* [The Association of Folk Highschools in Denmark], Gylling, DK, 572 songs with musical scores. This one is No.85: *Var I ikke galilæer!* [Were you not Galileans!](tr.ew).

2. Jødelands apostelskare!

Hvad i verden kan forklare
kraften i det gamle ord,
som endnu gør underværker,
har til stolte mindesmærker
kirker alle trindt på jord!

31. Heiberg, J.L., *Samlede Skrifter : Poetiske Værker and Prosaiske Værker* [Collected Writings : Poetic Works and Prosaic Works] (1861), C.A. Reitzels Forlag, Cph., DK. 'Kong Salomon og Jørgen Hattemager' [King Solomon and George Hatmaker], Vol.I, Book 5, pp.171-280. (I owe this reference to George Pattison).
32. *KWXVII, SVX, The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress.*
33. Cedergreen Bech, *Ibid.*, p.105 (under I).
34. Ingemann, B.S., *Blade af Jerusalems Skomagers Lommebog* [Leaves from the Diary of Jerusalem's Cobbler], (1833), Reitzel, Copenhagen, DK, 112 pp. P.30.
35. *Pap.I*, esp. C 64, C 116, C 119 (1835). Aurbacher, Ludwig, *Ein Volksbüchlein* (1835), Munich, Germany, pp.1-27, 268-75.
36. Andersen, H.C., *Eventyr og Historier* [Fairytales and Stories], (date not given, acquired by the Bodleian Library on 2nd Jan. 1951), Flensted's Forlag, Odense, DK. 16 Vols. Vol.7, pp.99-107: 'Jødepigen' [The Jew-girl]. It was not common at that time in Denmark to say 'the Jewish girl', but as in 'Jew-feud', there is an intended negative slant in 'Jew-girl'. 'The Jewish Girl' would have been in Danish, 'Den Jødiske Pige'.

37. *Ibid.*, p.107. Grammar and punctuation have not been corrected. The text has been left as found.
38. Andersen, H.C., *Improvisatoren* [The Improvisor] in the series:
Topsøe-Jensen, H. (ed.), *Romaner og Rejseskildringer* [Novels and Travelogues] (1835...1943), Gyldendal, Copenhagen, DK, 320 pp. See pp.97 & 104.
39. *Ibid.*, *Kun en Spillemand* [Only a Fiddler].
40. Eliot, G., *Daniel Deronda* (1874-6...1996), Wordsworth Editions Ltd., Ware, U.K., 675 pp.
41. Brandes, G., *Hovedstrømninger i det 19de Aarhundredes Litteratur* [Main Streams in 19th Century Literature] (1872-5), Gyldendal, Copenhagen, DK. Vols.I-IV. "Lectures held at Copenhagen University in the Spring Half-year of 1874 and Autumn Half-year of 1875". P.246.
42. *Ibid.*, p.212.
43. Kjølbye. *Ibid.*, p.298.
44. *Dansk Jødisk Historie* [Danish Jewish History], journal, bi-annual started in 1980, Editor Bent Melchior.
- A rival magazine, *Tidsskrift for Jødisk Kultur* [Newsletter on Jewish Culture], was started in 1988. It receives articles from Jews and non-Jews alike.
45. *Ibid.*, No.13 (1983), p.21.
46. Wergeland, *Contribution*, *Ibid.*, p.8.
47. *Ibid.*, p.10.
48. *Ibid.*, p.27.
49. Born & Galung, *Ibid.*, p.xx.
50. Wergeland, *Ibid.*, p.44.
51. *Ibid.*, p.81.

All translations done by ew unless otherwise stated. References to authorized translations given where they exist.

CHAPTER 2

KIERKEGAARD'S PERSONAL BACKGROUND

In the last chapter, Kierkegaard's macro-environment was examined from the viewpoint of latent or blatant anti-Semitism. It was found that Denmark had accommodated a new faith group, the Jews, slowly, gradually but up to a point of total equality (in principle), and free access to the country from 1850. This process of integration, from its beginning in 1814, coincides with Kierkegaard's lifetime (1813-55). So, in what ways did it impact on his micro-environment? Before moving on to his anti-Judaism, anti-Jew, position to be established in Chapter 4 and 5, it is of interest to scrutinize his immediate influences, not in order to excuse his position, but as an attempt to understand its genealogy. This Chapter will address Kierkegaard's family background, his education, his friends and enemies as well as his cultural tastes and exposures. As in Chapter 1, it will become evident in Chapter 2 that Copenhagen University's Theology Department might have been the strongest opponent to Jewish integration

and thus the most negative influence. At the same time, it is realized that Kierkegaard was increasingly critical of his own Church and always harking back to his childhood faith, *Herrnhutism*. This brought him to an isolated position where the individual's [*den Enkeltes*] direct relationship with God came to resemble the Jewish God-relationship while remaining unflinchingly Christian.

Family and Herrnhutism

When contemplating Søren Kierkegaard's background, one should never forget that he came of Jutland peasant stock. Both his parents came from the harsh mid- to southern-Westcoast heath. As was typical in such societies, religion became intensified and was clung to in the face of hopeless poverty and fierce elements. His parents belonged to the *Herrnhuttern*, who had their headquarters in Christiansfeld (the southern east coast of Jutland). As *Herrnhutism* is not generally known about, the following few pages will set out its main history and traits. The peculiarity of *Herrnhutism* is of immense importance when studying Kierkegaard and there is no doubt that Kierkegaard viewed Judaism from this vantagepoint.

Herrnhutism, or *Brødremenigheden* ['the Brother Congregation', or 'the Brethren'] was formed in 1722 by Graf Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf who, in 1721, bought an estate in Germany, called Berthelsdorf, wanting to start a congregation of a Pietistic kind. He was joined by a group of Bohemian Brothers. They settled on a mountain called Hut [Guard] and so they laid the foundations of a town called *Herrnhut*. Other Pietists and Sectarians joined them. The Congregation nearly burst during the first years, trying to meld such disparate groups into one, although all were Christian Protestants and Pietists. In 1727, Zinzendorf managed to gather them all under the name 'The Renewed Unity of Brothers'. A council of elders were put in overall charge and an 'over-elder' was chosen. He, however, stepped back in 1741 and it was decided to make Christ himself the 'over-elder'. This decision was reached through the casting of lots. In order to find out the ways of Christ, casting of lots was used in all sorts of situations, from the choice of texts for the service to the choice of spouse. Apostolic customs, like foot washing, love meals, and brother kisses, were introduced. Zinzendorf was made a Bishop and remained the *de facto*

leader until his death in 1760. (He was born in 1700). To him, the confessional element was secondary. The Brotherhood was closest to Lutheranism but it was decided one should have no external Confession. The Church was a unity church with three subdivisions: the Lutheran, the Reformed and the Bohemian/Moravian section. The Brotherhood was united around the passion and death of Jesus, also called the 'Blood Theology'. It emphasized the importance of the emotional religious life. Today lots are no longer cast but a strong order and discipline still keep the Church united. Learning is highly regarded, while dancing and gaming are banned. Members were divided into groups that lived strictly apart. The groups were called 'choirs' [kor], and were children, unmarried men, unmarried women, married couples, widows, and widowers. They each wore a ribbon of a special colour to avoid any confusion. Each choir had a 'carer', a sort of soul-nurse. Great emphasis was put on the schooling. In 1727, two Brothers were sent to Copenhagen and Zinzendorf gathered a circle of adherents there in 1731. In 1739, *Brødremenighedens Societet* [The Society of Brethren] was established in Copenhagen. However, several legal restrictions

were put upon them until Government gave them permission to set up a 'Herrnhut town'. The Brotherhood then bought a farm in Christiansfeld. Although the Churches were small, there was soon a congregation in a number of countries: Norway, Sweden, the Caribbean, Africa, America. A Danish lexicon concludes:

No other church community has come even close to exercising such a comparatively large missionary activity as has the Brotherhood. It has been a unique example to the other Protestant communities.¹

For the purposes of understanding Søren Kierkegaard's religious hue and his reactions to Judaism and Jews, it is of interest to note that he too came from a minority Church (the word 'Church' is here used in the Lockean sense, 'a faith society').² It was Christian and Protestant but it was puritanical and centred on Christ's suffering and death. It believed in an immediate communication with God/Christ. It believed in the value of study and schooling. It effaced a commitment to a formal Confession. Yet, it comprehended three different interpretations.

Kierkegaard's father was gradually won over by the erudition and charm of the then Curate of *Vor Frue Kirke* [Our Lady's Church],

Jacob Peter Mynster (1775-1854) and the family also attended the services of the main Danish Protestant *Folkekirke* [Folk Church or People's Church]. He remained a member, though, all his life, of the Brotherhood with its strong emphasis on sin and hope for mercy.³ Mynster later became the Danish Primate (1834-54).

Søren Kierkegaard's faith came to him through his father and he never doubted God's existence, neither did he doubt that God was personally steering his life, and whatever happened, it was God's will. He did regret that his faith was a melancholy one and blamed his father, although a religion with its emphasis on the Crucifixion cannot have been the most cheerful one.

The small Søren must have seen Jews in the streets of Copenhagen; he is not likely to have come across them socially or in his home. He must have been brought up to blame Jews for the murder of Christ.

Education : School and University

Søren attended a private school (*Borgerdyden*

[Civic Virtue]) where he was taught Latin and Greek from an early age. At 17 (1830), he began his University studies within the Faculty of Theology. Here he continued his Latin and Greek, and added Hebrew to his disciplines. His exam questions are of interest in so far as they reveal some attitudes to Judaism (See Chapter 5). Many ideas picked up at University stayed in Kierkegaard's writings throughout; for instance, the premise that in early Christianity, people would have joined from two different camps, the Jews and the Heathens. Two different Christianities would have resulted. (See Chapter 4).

He finished his degree, *Magistergraden* [comparable with a Master's degree] in 1841 (having defended his thesis on 29th September). His diary, which started at the time of his entry into University and is preoccupied with his reading. There is very little comment on national or world affairs. It is therefore to be expected that there is no comment on the Jewish integration or the inauguration of the massive new Synagogue only ten minutes' walk from where he lived and almost next door to where he attended his lectures. Instead, he is

pondering the sad legend about the Eternal, Wandering Jew as he finds it in literature. He was under the influence of two very different teachers, Poul Martin Møller (1794-1838) and Hans Lassen Martensen (1808-84). They both taught him philosophy, but on the subject of Jews and Judaism, they taught in opposite directions. Møller, who was also a poet and novelist, had taught at Kierkegaard's school around 1821, when Kierkegaard was 8 years old and would have been in his second year. He taught Latin and Greek, subjects for which Kierkegaard had much affection and great ability; but in 1836-7, Møller was occupied by the idea of the Wandering Jew and attempted writing about it. He was then in frequent contact with his student, Søren Kierkegaard.⁴ Martensen, on the other hand, had a less romantic outlook on life in general and on Jews in particular. He was born in Flensburg, a Danish border area which had been alternately Danish and German. His first language was Low German [*plattysk*], although his father preferred Danish. His school treated Danish as a foreign language. Martensen still managed to reach a position of, first, lecturer in Theology, teaching Moral Philosophy to the new students in 1838.

Later, in 1840, he became a professor of Theology and met Kierkegaard when he was his tutor [*manuduktør*] (in 1838/9). He set out his views on Judaism and Jews in his major work *Den Christelige Ethik* [Christian Ethics] (1871-8) in no uncertain terms. It is only necessary to give one specimen of these views which he elaborated in the *Second Division : Social Ethics* of this work. The heading is: 'Heathenism and Judaism within the Christian State':-

Our reason for bringing forward modern Judaism among the forces at work for the dissolution of the Christian State and of Christian nationality, and for expatiating upon it at some length, is, that in any case a new power has in it appeared upon the stage, on which it was formerly unable to play any part. For the position of the Jews in Christendom was formerly one of oppression; nor can it be denied that they suffered at the hands of Christians, especially during the Middle Ages, much hardship and ill-treatment, to which, however, they gave but too much occasion by their usury and extortion.⁵

In other words, Jews had helped 'dissolve' their host nation. 'Granted, they had been ill-treated in the Middle Ages' (in the Middle Ages there were no Jews in Denmark, so Denmark was 'of course' innocent of that), but 'they had in fact brought it upon themselves,' continues Martensen, by their 'usury and extortion'

(two words for the same thing). He goes on to say that there are Orthodox Talmudic Jews but they are not the target of his anger. He solely blames the 'modern Jews' whose religion mainly consists of 'cosmopolitan principles of the French Revolution'. 'They call it "Judaism"'. 'They want to exercise "supremacy" through their possession of "three instruments of power", namely, "capital, admission into legislative assemblies, and finally the press"'.⁶ All the ingredients of modern anti-Semitism are here. Heine is hung out as a Jewish author, one of those "who vindicate the rights of free thought against the narrowness of Christianity". One wonders if such a passage, written by a bishop, would have seen the light of day in year 2000. Heine, of course, made a formal conversion and so the anti-Semitic remarks are a bit confused around him. Kierkegaard writes in 1838 in his Andersen review, *Af en endnu Levendes Papirer* [From the Papers of One Still Living]:

...because a Heine, Andersen could never become. For that he lacks both his genius and his outrage over Christianity.⁷

It is a back-handed compliment. If Kierkegaard knew of Heine's conversion, he would hardly have welcomed 'his outrage over Christianity'.

He was much later, in 1854-5, himself to become so 'outraged' by Christianity, or Christendom (meaning the clergy), that he accused it of being Judaism.⁸

Although Kierkegaard quotes the expression *Cosmopolit-Gesichter* [Cosmopolitan Faces] in *The Papers*, it seems to have little anti-Semitic content; cosmopolitanism being a classic accusation with its implications of disloyalty towards the host nation. He bemoans the French influence on Danish culture, which leaves "not the tiniest hiding place for poetry":

but the few pure specimens of normal people could, without having been exposed to the slightest profane contact or because of having looked too keenly at anything multi-coloured, speckled or striped, in dreadful monotony breed [avle] a whole litter of egalitarian, abstract *Cosmopolit-Gesichter*.⁹

This is about the fear of everyone becoming alike, rather than someone being different. It reminds one of another, later passage about sameness, in fact 'Communism':

Communism, which would say: thus it is profanely right. There must be no difference at all between human being and human being. Wealth and art and science and government etc. are of the evil. All human beings should be equal like workers in a factory,...., dressed alike, eating

the same food (made in a huge pot)
at the same time, in equal measure
etc. etc.

Pietism, which would say: thus it
is Christianly right. There must
be no difference between human
being and human being, we should be
brothers and sisters, sharing
everything. Wealth, class, art,
science etc are of the evil. All
human beings should be equal as
once upon a time in the little
Christiansfeld, dressed alike,
praying at certain times, marrying
by lot, going to bed at a certain
hour, eating the same food, from
one bowl, in a set rhythm etc.
etc.¹⁰

Either evil would come about if humankind had
its way and toppled all institutions and all
leaders. Society would 'atomize' and the two
opposites would be in combat about how to
interpret the phenomenon: 'Communism would say
this' and 'Pietism would say that', but really
they are both the same, horrible robotism.
Kierkegaard wanted a layered society with an
academic class, an aristocracy, in charge of the
rest. He did not welcome the end of the feudal
system, as has been so effectively explained in
Bruce Kirmmse's *Søren Kierkegaard's Golden Age
Denmark*. The reference to his own background,
Herrnhutism, is clear. The mention of the
acquisition of a spouse by lot could have no
other aim. The passage was written in 1848, ten
years on, as a draft for *A Cycle*

of *Ethical-religious Essays*. Kierkegaard shares his tutor's fear that society might entirely 'dissolve', but he does not, as Martensen, blame the Jews. The 'usury' accusation, though, was to appear often in Kierkegaard's later works and papers in connection with Jews. Although Martensen's *Christian Ethics* came out in 1882, it is a good indicator of his general, early attitudes to Jews. They are not likely to have been fundamentally different.

Initially, it was only the idea of the Wandering [*Evige*] Jew, passed on to him by Poul Martin Møller (who is today better remembered in Denmark for his novels and poems than his philosophy), which occupied his thoughts. (In Germany and Denmark, the archetype is called 'Eternal', not 'Wandering', sometimes, in Germany, both, i.e. 'the Eternal, Wandering Jew').

During his lifetime, Kierkegaard made no friends outside of his own faith. He had no Jewish friends and neither did he have any Catholic friends.¹¹ Heinrich Roos writing about Kierkegaard and Catholicism states that Kierkegaard knew little about Catholicism and

"had never read the major Catholic authors" such as "Thomas Aquinas".

Augustine he seemed to know from Church historical expositions, but not from own study, although he possessed the large Mauriner version in 18 volumes.¹²

Certainly, although Roos claims that Kierkegaard was on his way to becoming a Catholic and that his work therefore "has been a 'midway station' towards Catholicism to some of the best thinkers of our time", 'our time' being the 1950s,[13] Kierkegaard rarely, if ever, uses the word 'Catholicism'. He does mention the Pope, but usually as an alien institution and, as will become evident, he was moving away from an organized Church. In fact, the idea of the Pope, is Roos's weak point and he skates over it very lightly.

Before the introduction of religious freedom in Denmark with the Constitution of 1849, it was a criminal act to convert away from the State religion, in this case to Catholicism. When the Danish Catholics celebrated 150 years of religious freedom in 1999, they published a small book (120 pages) which contains several contributions, one of which is by Helge Clausen.

This paper is entitled *Carl Augustin Høffding Muus - en konvertit som måtte gå i landflygtighed i 1839* [a convert who had to go into exile in 1839]. There were then 500 Catholics in Denmark and Muus had come to feel that he had to become a Catholic, after a stay in Germany. He wrote to Mynster (Primate from 1834 until his death in 1854) stating that:

If I want to be happy on this Earth
and blissful in Heaven, I shall
have to go the Catholic way.¹⁴

Mynster was later to vote in Parliament against the Constitution. Muus was accepted into the Catholic Church later that year (1839), but he could not remain in his native country. He spent his exile in Germany where he became Research Librarian at the University Library of Würzburg. With the new Constitution in 1849, he could return to Denmark. However, until 1872, candidates for professorships still had to swear by the Augsburg Confession. In any case, Muus was not offered a job and so he returned to Würzburg and only left when he was pensioned off in 1870. He could then return to Denmark where he died in 1885 aged 89. By then the number of Catholics living in Denmark was 3000.

It was also Mynster who in 1842 decided

that the Baptists (who practise adult baptism) after having been in the country since 1839, should not be allowed to behave as a community and therefore their children had to be baptized in the State Church. The adults could assemble and take Holy Communion in their own place. The Baptists, naturally, protested and the public opinion was on their side. Several priests refused to baptize in such circumstances. Peter Kierkegaard, Søren's brother, then a vicar in the Sorø area, refused to comply and got his brother's almost wholehearted support.¹⁵ Such a refusal should have brought dismissal; but for that to go through, it had to have the King's approval. It was thought that the only reason why Peter Kierkegaard was not sacked was that the King, Frederik VII, who knew Peter Kierkegaard personally, withheld his approval. Anyway, with the Constitution of 1849, Denmark had freedom of religion and therefore, forced baptisms could no longer be carried out.

Kierkegaard tended to involve himself in discussions only when they directly touched upon him. If his brother had not been involved, with his livelihood at stake, it is doubtful he would have written about forced baptism in letters

and his diary. He mainly commented on Church matters, given the above condition, and literature (often drama). One could not call him a 'political animal' and this may have been caused partly by the existence of censorship, but also perhaps by etiquette. It was long thought in Denmark to be vulgar to discuss in society: 'religion, politics and money'. They were thought divisive issues and the two latter ones not sufficiently spiritual. Kierkegaard gives a hint of this in *The Papers*:

While now these novels must seek their true sympathetic readers in the older generation,...equally their relationship with the politicians will not be worth mentioning for the simple reason that it is after all still only to the one who has ears with which to hear that the Gospel can be preached, and a resignation which is not a result of an external pressure but a development of an inner flexibility, of the joy which has conquered the world, seems far too ephemeral for political pragmatics.¹⁶

When Kierkegaard comments on society, it is usually from a philosophical, abstract angle. 'Politics', as one understands the word today, plays no part in Kierkegaard's writing. The young student could dream about the archetypal Jew, he had no interest in the actual Jew, living in Copenhagen. This was to change because he was personally offended by a Jew.

The Corsair and Goldschmidt

The absolute catastrophe in Kierkegaard's life happened in 1845. This was ten years ahead of Kierkegaard's untimely death. He was only 32 years old when it hit him. (In some sense, he lived half of a life and during that short time, he was burdened by ill health. He was found not fit for army service already before his entry into University, aged 17.)

Up until this time, as has been shown above, there was no anti-Semitism in Kierkegaard's writings. Even when he reviewed Andersen's book, half of which is about a Jewess, he barely picked up on it and indifferently used Andersen's views on Jewishness as an example of Andersen's "random thoroughness" [*tilfældige Grundighed*]. He refers to "his whole examination of Naomi's religious situation". Andersen says she was "a kind of freethinker..., religiously her outlook was neither Ascetic nor Hellenistic".¹⁷ Kierkegaard does not engage with Andersen's views, only with his breaches of style. He had no sensitivity towards 'freethinking Jews' or the subsequent discussion about 'young Germany'.

He had not yet been to Germany.

The catastrophe was like an unexploded bomb he had picked up with childish curiosity and lack of caution. It exploded in his face and he had to live with the consequences for the rest of his life.¹⁸ Briefly, Kierkegaard's *Stages on Life's Way* had had an insolent review by the critic, P.L. Møller, who thought himself, and was thought by others, to be the model for The Seducer in *The Seducer's Diary* and who therefore wanted to 'pay him back'. The owner and editor of the magazine, *The Corsair* [*Corsaren*], Meir Goldschmidt (1819-97), had already given Kierkegaard's book a positive mention although with little understanding. Kierkegaard, however, responded in a public way by putting a counter-article in the newspaper *Fædrelandet* [The Fatherland]. He saw Møller as part and parcel of *The Corsair* and felt himself attacked by that magazine, so he challenged the editor and said he would be delighted to get in *The Corsair* - and so he did! A stream of satire and parody followed, at his expense. Although using a pen-name was common, everyone knew who everyone was. P.L. Møller had already been publicly connected with *The Corsair* in

"Erslew's *Forfatter Lexicon*" [Encyclopaedia of Authors].¹⁹ Kierkegaard wrote in one of the biggest Copenhagen newspapers: "*ubi* P.L.Møller, *ibi* *The Corsair*".²⁰ With that, he had 'outed' Møller. He had also broken etiquette which said that one respected each other's *noms de plume*. It 'was not done' to break someone else's anonymity. Møller was enraged and in despair. He felt all his ambitions to inherit Oehlenschläger's chair at Copenhagen University had been crushed.²¹ He sincerely believed no one knew that he occasionally edited *The Corsair*, which in English terms would translate into a kind of *Private Eye*, not a very dignified or highbrow thing to do. The people selecting Oehlenschläger's successor, when the time came, would be precisely the kind of establishment figures so often hung out in the magazine. Kierkegaard thought he was strong enough to take on such a small outfit and *The Corsair* thought Kierkegaard was indestructible. In his memoirs, Goldschmidt reflects:

I did not really like him, although I was constantly attracted to him. ...he had no love in his heart [he was] neither gentle nor humble... there was a peculiar purity and a consequent particular power, and when he then stood before me in that apparition, I realized that one should really make way for such people, hat in hand, lowering the

fence for their little weaknesses, and when I then immediately remembered that precisely I had been fatefully led to attack his weaknesses, then there was a veil, something both pleasant and unpleasant in which I could wrap myself and hide from the thought: he himself took it so cheerfully ["*gemytlig*", mixture of German and Danish], was not hurt, did not suffer because of it."²²

) Goldschmidt, thirty-two years after the event, saw himself as "in some ways a blind instrument, in other ways a responsible instrument".[23] He later worked out a theory of natural justice which he called 'the Nemesis Theory'. In this case, however, it looks suspiciously like an 'evasion-of-responsibility theory'. About Kierkegaard's language, he had the following to say:

) His language itself repelled me, because it was forced and manic, and because this mannerism was coloured by love-of-self or vanity, and yet, I was at times, quite carried away by admiration.²⁴

Kierkegaard's language has been commented on by many of his contemporaries. Israel Levin, who was Kierkegaard's secretary from 1844-50,²⁵ referred to it as an example of beautiful Danish.²⁶ Another contemporary, the poet and playwright, Henrik Hertz, writes:

Those who have absorbed the German philosophy cannot at all manage to carry it out in Danish. Their

texts are teeming with words no Dane understands. Kierkegaard's disputation on Andersen shows what kind of language we might expect from this philosophy.²⁷

Not complimentary! Kierkegaard's language was no doubt influenced by academic fashion and compares well with the style of such writers as Heiberg and Sibbern, who were both trend-setters. However, it also had its own idiosyncratic admixture of South Jutland phrases, e.g. '*så er det bagefter*' ['then it is afterwards', i.e. 'then it is too late']. One gets the impression that Kierkegaard was not entirely secure in his knowledge of these phrases' origin and so can use some of them with evident intent, while others almost tumble out and give him away as the son of a peasant, a man of Jutland descent, second generation of wealth. The combination of High German, Latin, Greek, French and then Jutland can be unintentionally comical. One gets an impression of social insecurity via these glimpses and they probably prepared the ground for his later anti-Semitism, class snobbery and male chauvinism. It is a language liable, like all fashions, to date and today even Danes find it convoluted and inaccessible. However, it is also melodic.

) Kierkegaard did not want to believe that Goldschmidt was responsible for pieces ridiculing him but as the smear campaign continued and he found himself sniggered at in the street by the lower classes, he began to realize that P.L.Møller could not be the sole editor/writer and his anger flared until it became a hatred of obsessional proportions. The sheer volume of anti-Goldschmidt instalments in his *Papers* bears testimony to this. Reading selected diary pieces, one does not get this impression because only representative pieces have been included, and these ravings do become tedious, so they get left out, but there is much to be said for proof through quantity as well as quality.

) Goldschmidt on his part did have reasons to dislike Kierkegaard even though Kierkegaard had been sympathetic towards his book *En Jøde* [A Jew] which came out in 1845. Whenever they met in the street, Kierkegaard was patronizing and superior towards him, giving him advice about how to write and how to dress. Like many people, Goldschmidt thought it would have done Kierkegaard good, had he had to make a living for himself:

If K. could have become a married man, life would have been able to give him sufficient grief, even misfortune, but not despair.²⁸

It is poignant to see a Jew, Goldschmidt, attaching the word 'despair' to a Christian, Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard under the tuition of P.M.Møller had found the archetype of the Wandering Jew a symbol of 'despair'.

In his memoirs, Goldschmidt writes that although born in the year of the *Jew-feud*, 1819, in Vordingborg, he met no *Jødefjendskab* [Jew animosity] there. But he could not claim to be entirely untouched:

Only once it happened, during a terrible downpour, that, as I was running home from school with a couple of my cousins, a boy shouted: "Jew, can you eat bacon and cream!" Without saying anything, one cousin turned off the road, reached the boy at a run, bashed him down into a hole full of water, and when we got home, we all silently went down to the larder, drank cream and ate cold fried bacon, looking at each other without a word.²⁹

Goldschmidt's family had come to Denmark several generations back, his paternal great-grandfather immigrated from Hamburg in 1718 and married in Denmark a grand-daughter of Meyer Goldschmidt who had immigrated before 1680.³⁹ Therefore, when he was born, the family had been

in Denmark for between 100-139 years. He was dark-haired and brown-eyed and although he observed no Jewish traditions, and even needed substantial help to write his book *En Jøde* because he did not know Jewish customs and liturgy, he was not considered quite Danish. Morten Borup, in his Introduction to the memoirs, writes:

He felt himself that he was a Dane equally as much as a Jew and for this reason it hit him hard when Grundtvig in his journal *The Dane* in 1849 with every acknowledgement of his immense talent for writing in the Danish language declared him to be a foreigner.³¹

He may have been 'hit hard' but he acknowledged frequently in his book his split identity. He at one point sought conversion to Christianity (1858) and had to give up:

the baptized has to acknowledge -
acknowledge at the renunciation -
the existence of the Devil. After
that all has been broken...³²

The Devil was not a Jewish concept, thought Goldschmidt. He returns to Judaism 'realizing' that European poetry and literature do not belong to him. On the other hand, 'he is neither great enough, nor sufficiently immersed in Jewish culture to write Jewishly'. He is forced to write with his head and not his heart. He is constantly reminded by strangers that he

was not a friend of Kierkegaard's either, although Kierkegaard attended and enjoyed his plays. Hertz writes in his notes to posterity:

We met...often, although only in the street, public places and the like, and I very much liked his cheerful, intelligent entertainment. His strange, modulated, often somewhat castrato-like voice, his sudden transition from a very cheerful to a very serious expression...³³

Although Hertz looked Jewish and had a Jewish surname, he clearly thought a quick baptism would sort out any racial problems. He initially published anonymously, but gradually his poems and plays became noticed and appreciated. So, on Sunday 9th April 1832, Henrik Hertz was baptized by the Rev. Rothe. His witnesses [*faddere*] were P.V.Jacobsen and Lorenz Kilde. A month later, Jacobsen wrote in a letter:

The effects of Hertz's demasking have not been as unfortunate as I thought they would be, and even less so than those he himself had feared. Only an almost imperceptible lowering of people's estimation of his works has taken place.³⁴

Kyrre sums it up:

But still then a lowering - after the capital having for 6 years been spilling over with admiration for the anonymous poet, and after he had sought forgiveness [*sic*] for his ancestry through the baptism.³⁵

From this moment on, writes Kyrre, he was condemned to write light entertainment. Georg Brandes, a fellow Jew, wrote in 1868:

I do not find it pretty when authors of Jewish origin, as for instance Hertz, in their authorship do everything in order to bring their ancestry into oblivion, hide it almost as a *partie honteuse* by never choosing a Jewish subject. Who knows if not Hertz has deprived his lyre of an octave.³⁶

There was in fact among Hertz's notes a sketch of an idea for a short-story entitled 'Der Jude'. However, it was rather the opposite of the expected: 'a Christian pretends to be a Jew because he is a virtuoso violinist and as the Jews were renowned for their musicality, it would help his career no end and give him an aura of romance'. One wonders whether Copenhagen would have been ready for such ironic role-reversals as those.³⁷

When looking at these two writers, Goldschmidt and Hertz, one who did not convert and one who did, one does find issues which complicate a straight-forward verdict on Danish anti-Semitism in cultural circles, and victimization of individual Jews. Both men admitted to an inner barrier against full integration, a duality in the personality, none of which could

be amputated. Both felt they had to write with the brain and not the heart. Hertz (ironically, his name means 'heart' in German) had been strategically clever in that he had achieved public success before converting and revealing his true identity. At that point the public could not very well say it did not like his plays after all. It still could not release him from the constraints he felt himself in and his plays remained light entertainment. Marrying in his fifties, a young Jewish woman, these plays became perfunctory and his social life confined to the nearest family circle. Like Israel Levin, Kierkegaard's secretary, he eventually received a State grant of 1000 Rdlr.[Rigsdaler (monetary unit)],³⁸ but to maintain a family, he went on needing to produce quantity rather than quality and he never became a serious writer in the estimation of the Danish public, then or now.

Kierkegaard had views on the phenomenon of 'the converted Jew'. He had come across one in Berlin in 1841 and had attended his lectures on 'Logic and Metaphysics'. His name was Karl W. Werder (1806-93). In a letter to F.C.

Sibbern, also a professor, he wrote:

Dear Professor

...
Werder is a virtuoso. More one cannot say about him. I have a suspicion that he must be a Jew; because baptized Jews always excel through virtuosity, and of course, play a role in all sorts of directions in our time.³⁹

Werder's virtuosity found expression not only in the lecture hall but also in the theatre, where he had a première of a play entitled 'Christopher Columbus' while Kierkegaard was still in Berlin. Sadly, he could not get a ticket.⁴⁰ (See also Chapter 4).

Hertz too must have been a bit of a 'virtuoso' because from the day of his conversion and his coming out as the anonymous playwright, he was a part of the Heiberg *entourage* and one would presume he would have had to converse in the exclusive salons with people like Martensen as well as Poul Martin Møller. It was a society into which Kierkegaard was not invited although he wrote a eulogy for Madam Heiberg, the famous actress with Jewish roots, in his *Krisen og en Krise i en Skuespillerindes Liv* [*The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress*].⁴¹ Johanne Luise's reaction can be

sensed in her fleeting mention of it in her memoirs.⁴² It was no more than a polite bow. Johan Ludvig was even less welcoming in response to the gifts of Kierkegaard's own books with personal inscription and Kierkegaard later wrote scathingly about Heiberg's 'astronomical' journal *Urania*. Of course, Kierkegaard's negativity towards Hegelianism would have been unacceptable in the very seat of Danish Hegelianism.

Israel Salomon Levin (1810-83) has already been mentioned several times. He probably was closer than any other Jew to Kierkegaard, although, as has been shown, that does not say much. Having worked so closely with his employer that he would often spend whole days with him, one would have thought he would be an excellent source of biographical material. He was not! The reasons are fairly easy to understand, apart from the fact that from 1869, he could read Kierkegaard's *Papers* and find there remark after remark about the unpleasant Jews. He did not want to go down in history as Kierkegaard's secretary, he wanted to be remembered for his own important work as a philologist. There is also some evidence that

the relationship between the two men was uneasy, although perhaps each respected the other's competence. Levin is the only person in this panoply who has been spectacularly under-researched, despite an abundance of raw material in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. In return for his 1000 Rdlr. and free accommodation at one of the King's castles (Frederiksberg Castle),⁴³ he was required to produce a Danish dictionary. He did not complete the task but left behind a vast amount of notes which today forms the backbone of the Danish Dictionary. Garff writes in his large biography, *SAK*:

At his death he left behind a collection of 150.000 slips of paper with the preparations for a dictionary which constitutes an important part of the foundation of *Ordbog over Det danske Sprog* [Dictionary of the Danish Language] in which the frequent references to Kierkegaard also have a good historical background.⁴⁴

He also left a number of publications. (See Chapter 5). He was a non-observant Jew although he had a Jewish burial. He lies buried in the Northern Cemetery [*Nordre Kirkegård*] in Copenhagen. However, a small collection of letters between them survives, giving a sharp flavour of their relationship. It was very much master-servant. Thulstrup describes him as a *Litterat*

['man of letters'] and *Sprogforsker* ['language researcher']. Garff calls him a 'philologist' and 'translator'. A Jewish Biographical Index published in Munich calls him a 'grammarian' and 'literary historian'.⁴⁵ The trouble was that he took his high school examinations [*studentereksamen*] in 1829, but never actually a final University exam. He was still able to apply for a University post in Nordic Philology in 1862. A law of 12th January 1858 said:

The access to lecturing posts at the University must not be limited by [the demand for] any specific exam.⁴⁶

The applicant without an exam could instead write a paper proving his academic mettle. One requirement was a knowledge of Icelandic and Levin chooses to write a paper on why this requirement is irrelevant. He states:

in the formation- and development-history of the language from 1450 up to today's date, German plays an incomparably more important role than Icelandic.⁴⁷

That seems a fair argument. Levin mentions Kierkegaard's language as an example of beautiful Danish (as mentioned above) in this paper. Still, he had to withdraw his application because Icelandic was non-negotiable.

Levin is often described as 'querulous'. Thulstrup writes, "Levin was constantly polemicizing with someone or other".⁴⁸ Kierkegaard writes a succinct letter:

My good Levin,

Monday

If you can, please come to me today a.m. at 11½, in my room. You are of course at present lying idle; because the fact that you are rowing with all of society, cannot be considered an activity.

Kind regards,

S. Kierkegaard

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It is slightly insulting, quite arrogant and in other letters it combines with some stilted attempts at eloquence. This charge that Levin was always involved in quarrels with people has been repeated everywhere he is mentioned, but no one can actually provide examples. The one he provides himself (above) may be a quarrel but the point made is hardly unreasonable. His style is clear and simple. It is not ornate like Kierkegaard's and so has dated less. There are no attempts at humour or elegance. Incidentally, Levin was himself briefly prodded by *The Corsair*. P.L.Møller wrote, "Mr Research-

er Levin, who receives a pension for making a language confusion..."⁵⁰ So, there was no exemption for Jews on account of the magazine's Jewish owner and editor.

Intellectual Jews in Copenhagen, like Hertz, Levin and Goldschmidt had no sense of brotherhood and they had stabs at each other no different from anyone else. Goldschmidt describes a meeting he had with Levin in a Copenhagen street:

One day, I met *I. Levin* in the street. We only knew each other slightly, had fleetingly met at a printer's; but nothing much is needed in youth in order to get into a lively conversation in the street. He was, as it seemed, currently filled with aversion towards a young person with whom he had recently spoken and who posed as an esthete without knowing Lessing. Somehow, he was again seized with enthusiasm for Lessing: What do you give me for such a man? After all, he is surely worth knowing! First, he wrote reviews in order to kindle good works of poetry, and when it did not bear any fruit, he started writing them himself; for instance *Nathan der Weise*! What do you give me for an esthete who does not know him? - Whether Levin had a suspicion that I was in the same predicament as that esthete, I don't know; but I went at once across to Høst [well-known academic bookshop, still trading today (2009)] and bought Lessing's collected works [32 vols.]⁵¹

This is a somewhat different picture of Levin. Here he is being the master, Goldschmidt the servant and yet Goldschmidt had a University degree while Levin had none. Goldschmidt was, of course, a 'journalist', a commoner. Henrik Hertz had nothing but contempt for him:

In a State, everyone has to give up a part of their freedom, but young cocks like Goldschmidt and consorts imagine that freedom consists in smoking a cigar in front of a guardsman, singing the Marseillaise in the theatre and making caricatures of people.⁵²

and:

Is it perhaps not time the public were allowed on its own initiative to take action?⁵³

The public was, however, lying low, hoping someone else might get targeted by the merciless satire of *The Corsair*. It is doubtful anybody else dared to challenge *The Corsair* as Kierkegaard had done. He often felt alone and isolated in his fight against *The Corsair* which was in truth more a fight for survival than any real counterblast. Heiberg, he thought, as the King of Culture in Denmark, ought to have spoken out in defence of the writing class. He would have been heartened to know that Hertz, the playwright, had very firm opinions about *The Corsair* and Goldschmidt.

Summary

In this Chapter, the emphasis has been on Kierkegaard's closest environment, the people he knew, and some of the vignettes that could throw a light on conditions in Copenhagen for intellectual Jews. There has been a chronological progression in the text, rather than a thematic one. It is striking how bourgeois the overall picture looks. A cartoon in *The Corsair* is hardly on a par with blood and murder. From a Jewish point of view, times were good in Denmark. Kierkegaard experienced no bad encounters with Jews. He read Goldschmidt's book *A Jew* and sympathized. It was only when servants began pointing fingers and sniggering at him, that he realized, 1) the ubiquity of the magazine, 2) the long-lasting effects of each joke in it at his expense. Then, like a wounded animal, or Cyclops, he turned in rage and looked for someone to blame. He realized Goldschmidt could not be innocent and after that there was no mercy. His actual words about Judaism and Jews will follow in Chapters 4 & 5.

It has to be remembered that Danish Christianity underwent great change in Kierkegaard's lifetime. He was as appalled by Mynster's decree that all Baptist children be baptized by force as he was by Grundtvig's escalating movement of popular, nationalistic Christianity. He became more and more homeless within the Church and his long-held view that Church and State ought to be separated grew stronger. With his fixation on the inferiority of Judaism and the Jewish character, he began to see the ghosts everywhere. He started accusing the Church of having become Jewish and Grundtvig of being Jewish.⁵⁴ It is debatable whether one could term such all-encompassing anger 'anti-Semitism'. Bruce Kirmmse would say No, as he has done in his two articles on 'Kierkegaard, Judaism and Jews'. I am arguing here that one certainly could. The mere acceptance of the word 'Jew' as a derogatory term is anti-Semitism.

Kierkegaard writes with great tenderness and understanding about *den Enkelte* [the individual] and his moral responsibility. It remains, though, incompatible with his

less, about Jews. It must be agreed that there is very little in Kierkegaard's background which would explain why he filled his journals, and to some extent his works, with rants about the badness of Jews and Judaism. Other people were insulted and mocked by *The Corsair*, Kierkegaard's livelihood was under no threat,. He could afford, literally, to ignore the rabble and walk past Goldschmidt in the street without so much as a nod. He wanted to think of himself as aristocracy. Long after *The Corsair* had ceased, Kierkegaard was still tormenting himself with the memories of people below his class making fun of his trousers. And then the stories that were to go down the generations were not the ones published in a magazine, but those told by his friends. Kierkegaard was socially insecure, that made him vulnerable.⁵⁵

In the next Chapter, I shall attempt to make a working definition of 'anti-Semitism', or, as Goldschmidt would call it, 'Jew hatred'. But first, a look at methodology. Some hearsay stories will be compared, primary vs. secondary evidence discussed and the problem of the pseudonyms considered.

Chapter 2

NOTES

1. (ed.) Blangstrup, C., *Salomonsens Konversations Leksikon* (1921) Vol.XI, A/S J.H. Schultz Forlagsboghandel, Cph., DK, pp.177-8, s.v. 'Herrnhut' and 'Herrnhuter' see 'Brødremenigheden' ['The Brother Congregation' or 'The Brotherhood'].
2. (ed.) Tully, J.H., *John Locke : A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689...1983) Hackett Publ. & Co., Indianapolis, U.S.A., p.28.
3. Jansen, F.J. Billeskov, *Søren Kierkegaard*, pp.640-9 in (ed.) Cedergreen Bech, S. *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon* (1887...1980) Gyldendal, Cph., DK.
4. Pattison, G., *Kierkegaard, Religion and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Culture* (2002) Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K. 244 pp. See especially pp.72-95 ('Cosmopolitan Faces'). Note in particular p.79.
5. Martensen, H.L., *Christian Ethics* (1882) T.& T. Clark, Edinburgh (tr. Taylor, S. from the German), pp.106-7 (\$48).

The Danish edition was entitled *Den Christelige Ethik*, Vols.I+II. Vol.I covered 'the ordinary part', Vol.II 'the individual and social ethics'. It was published: 1871 (Part I) and 1878 (Part II). (This quote is by courtesy of Stephen Backhouse, who brought this section to my attention.)

6. *Ibid.*

7. (trs.&eds.)Hong, H.& E., *Kierkegaard's Writings* [KW] (1978-2000) Princeton University Press, Princeton, U.S.A., Vol.I, p.67. For the Danish original see: (eds.)Heiberg, J.L.&Drachmann, A. B., *Søren Kierkegaards Samlede Værker* [Søren Kierkegaard's Collected Works] (1920-38) Gyldendal, Cph., DK., Vol.XIII, pp.47-100. See p.69.
8. *Pap.XI*, 3, B57, pp.104-8 (1854) [Hong 6947].
9. *SVXIII*, *Ibid.*, p.60.
10. *Pap.IX*, B22, pp.320-1 (1848) [Not in Hong].
11. Roos, H., *Søren Kierkegaard og Katolicismen* (1952) Munksgaard, Cph., DK., 51pp. P.10.
12. *Ibid.*, p.11.
13. *Ibid.*, p.50.
14. (ed.)Rasmussen, Jørgen Nybo, *Religionsfrihed i 150 År : en jubilæumshilsen fra danske katolikker og baptister* [Religious Freedom for 150 Years : a jubilee Greeting from Danish Catholics and Baptists] (1999), Ælnoth Skriftserie Nr.9, Gjerrild, DK., 120pp.
15. (ed.)Thulstrup, N., *Breve og Aktstykker vedrørende Søren Kierkegaard* [Letters and Documents Regarding S.K.](1953) Munksgaard, Cph., DK., Vols.I-II. Letters from Søren to Peter Kierkegaard re. forced baptism nos.: 75,116,117,118, & 133.
For the Engl.tr. see (eds.)Hong,H.&E., *Kierkegaard's Writings* (1978-2000) Princeton University Press, Princeton, U.S.A. (tr.) Rosenmeier, H., *KWXXV*.
16. *KWI*, *ibid.*, p.67. Or *SVXIII*, *ibid.*, p.63 & 99-100.
17. *SVXIII*, *Ibid.*, p.91.
18. For a detailed exposition of the *Corsair Affair*, see *KWXIII*, *ibid.*

19. KWXXII [SVXIII] *Point of View*, p.230 & Note 20.
20. I.e. 'Where P.L.Møller is, there is *The Corsair*, *ibid.*
21. Oehlenschläger, Adam (1779-1850).
22. (ed.)Borup, M., Goldschmidt, M.A. *Livs Erindringer og Resultater* [Life Recollections and Results] (1877...1965) Rosenkilde & Bagger, Cph., DK., Vols.I-II. P.273.
23. *Ibid.*, p.273 (Vol.I).
24. *Ibid.*, p.272 (Vol.I).
25. Garff, J., SAK (2001) Gads Forlag, Cph.,DK, 703pp. P.257.
26. Levin, I.S., *Den nye Docentpost : Nogle Aktstykker* [The New Reader's Post : Some Documentary Exerpts] (1863) Wilhelm Prior, Cph., DK., pp.61. P.13.
27. (ed.)Kyrre, H., *Henrik Hertz : Liv og Digting* [Life and Poetry] (1916) H.Hagerup's Forlag(sic), Cph., DK., pp.183, plus an "Addendum of Posthumous Papers" (pp.55). Addendum p.38.
28. Goldschmidt, *ibid.*, p.275 (Vol.I).
29. *Ibid.*, p.181 (Vol.II).
30. Blangstrup, *ibid.*, p.232.
31. Borup, *ibid.*, p.13 (Vol.I).
32. Goldschmidt, *ibid.*, p.312 (Vol.II). His novel *En Jøde* [A Jew] (First published under the *nom de plume* 'Adolph Meyer') was translated and published in the U.K. in two versions. One was translated by Howitt, Mary under the title *Jacob Bendixen, the Jew* (1851) and the other by Bushby, Anne S. under the title *The Jew of Denmark* (1852)(p.313, Vol.I). It sold in 50.000 copies without the author receiving any royalties (p.224, Vol.II).

33. Kyrre, *ibid.*, Addendum pp.9-10.
34. *Ibid.*, p.65.
35. *Ibid.*, p.66.
36. *Ibid.*, p.62.
37. *Ibid.*, Addendum p.50.
38. *Ibid.*, p.176.
39. (ed.)Thulstrup, *ibid.*, p.84 (Vol.I). Letter dated "15th December [1841]".

All letters and documents can be found in Hong's *KWXXV*, (tr.)Rosenmeier, H., Publ. by Princeton University Press, etc. (*ibid.*).

A note in Thulstrup, p.45 (Vol.II) gives the following information about Werder:

"Werder,Karl W.(1806-93) was an adherent to Hegel's philosophy. He became a professor in Berlin in 1838. S.K. attended his lectures on 'Logic and Metaphysics, with special regard to prevalent systems in older and newer philosophy' (See *Pap.III*, C28-32). In 1838, he had had Danish visitors and received Danish guests with great kindness."See also Chapter 4, Note 17.

40. *Ibid.*, p.93 (Vol.I). The play lasted 4½hrs.
41. *SVX*, pp.363-84 (2nd ed.). *KWXVII*. It was published in 1848.
42. Heiberg, J.L., *Et Liv, Genoplevet i Erindringer* [A Life, Re-experienced in the Remembrance] (1891...1944) Gyldendal, Cph., Vols.I-IV. Pp.134-7 (Vol.II). It was written from 1855, i.e. after Kierkegaard's death (11/11/1855). The volumes were published a year after J.L.Heiberg (Mrs)'s death (21/12/1890).
43. The King was Frederik VII (1808-63). Reign: 1848-63. See Blangstrup, *Ibid.*, p.742. Levin received a grant and free accommodation from 1858.

44. Garff, *ibid.*, p.259.
45. (ed.) Schmuck, H., *Jüdischer Biographischer Index* [Jewish Biographical Index] (1998) K.G.Saur, Munich, Ger.
46. Levin, *ibid.*, p.10.
47. *Ibid.*, p.14.
48. (ed.)Thulstrup, *ibid.*, p.68 (Vol.II).
Note 125.
49. *Ibid.*, Letter 125, p.145 (Vol.I).
50. Goldschmidt, *ibid.*, p.248 (Vol.I).
51. *Ibid.*, p.155 (Vol.I). - Lessing, G.E.,
Sämtliche Schriften [Collected Writings](1825-28), Berlin, Stettin, Ger.,
Vols.I-XXXII (was owned by Søren Kierkegaard acc. to the *Auction Catalogue*
of his library + ASKB 1747-62 - presumably, he had had them bound with appx.
2 vols. to a book, therefore only 15 numbers).
52. Kyrre, *ibid.*, Addendum, p.45. (Written by
H.Hertz himself).
53. *Ibid.*, Addendum p.43.
54. Kirmmse, B.H., 'Kierkegaard, Jødedommen og
Jøderne' [Kierkegaard, Judaism and
Jews], *Kierkehistoriske Samlinger*
(1992) pp.77-107. See also *Kierkegaardiana* 17 (1994), pp.83-97,DK.

See also *Pap.X,6*, B67, p.71 (1849)[Not
in Hong], and *Pap.X,4*, A69, pp.43-45
(1851) [Not in Hong].
55. See amongst many other instances:-
Pap.VIII,1, A655, p.303 (1847-8)[Hong
6099];
Pap.VIII,1, A630, p.286 (1848)[Not in
Hong];
Pap.IX, A97, p.51 (1848) [Not in Hong];
Pap.X,1, A46, p.37 (1849) [Hong 6313];
Pap.X,1, A69, p.54 (1849)[Not in Hong];
Pap.X,2, A25, pp.21-2 (1849) [Not in
Hong];

Pap.X,2, A492, pp.349 (1850) [Not in
Hong];
Pap.X,3, A598, pp.391-2 (1850)[Not in
Hong];
Pap.X,4, A168, p.95 (1852)[Hong 6744];
Pap.XI,1, A.234, p.189 (1854) [Hong
2971];
Pap.XI,3, B211:14, p.353 (1854)[Not in
Hong];
Pap.XI,3, B152, pp.241-3 (1855)[Not in
Hong].

II PHILOSOPHICAL

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

Before looking at definitions of anti-Semitism and specifying which one has been used here, it is necessary to address some difficulties peculiar for Søren Kierkegaard. There is first the problem of his own directions for the use of his texts, then there is the problem of the pseudonyms and the discussion about his writing 'in character' or not, the legitimacy of using his *Journals* and finally, there is the whole area of hearsay evidence. In this chapter, there will be a transition from the historical/biographical and the methodological into the evidential and discursive.

Kierkegaard's Directions : the Niche Scholar

Kierkegaard came to despise the clergy. It was an abomination to him that a man could dress up in velvet and purple in order to tell his congregation about the simple life of Jesus and his disciples, then go home to his wife and children, all living off the extreme suffering

and deprivation of Christ without the slightest attempt to 'imitate' him. In the same way, he found it abusive for a scholar to make a cosy little niche out of the study of one genius. It seemed to him almost cannibalistic. He did not want to be studied in that way himself. The conscientious scholar is therefore faced with a dilemma: In what way is he to read Kierkegaard, and how can he write about him?¹

If Scholar X makes it his life's work to study and interpret Philosopher Y, making in the process a reasonable living for himself and his family, does that make him an academic cannibal? It raises the question: Does Philosopher Y not want to be read? If not, why write? Why philosophize? What is one to do with the words of a great philosopher, if not to hear them, read them, ponder them and then write one's own response? Is not the heart of philosophy debate, dialectics? It is hard mental work to analyze a philosophical text, it is not exactly the easiest way of making a living and it is not lucrative either. In order to live, an author's works need to be frequently re-interpreted, just as a play needs to be acted. It has to be dis-

cussed. Philosophy is a search for truth and likewise the play. Neither can be more than an approximation. These products are man's high-jumps, and messages have to be brought back to those who cannot jump and those who will jump tomorrow. As Goethe put it:

*Wer immer strebend sich bemüht
Den können wir erlösen.
[Faust, II]₂*

Humanity needs this on-going dialogue to keep standards high. If the scholar can convey a difficult text, it must surely be only fair that his society should show its appreciation by making it possible for that man, or woman, to do it all day, every day.

There seems to be a scale perhaps between the niche scholar, who works in good faith, and the one who takes a free ride, but it is not clear how one could get by without a minimum of skill and good faith, as well as earnest hard work. In other words, Kierkegaard's directives must be heeded and respected, but also argued with. Kierkegaard knew that posterity would be more sympathetic than his contemporaries. He often consoled himself with the thought. It

must be in his interest, and pleasing to him, so to speak, that his works are still in circulation today, that scholars debate his thoughts and explain his different historical circumstances.

Of course, one appreciates the point, that a brilliant mind should stretch itself to the full and not lazily be a follower if it can be an originator. Everyone, though, has to start as a follower.

The Pseudonyms

The use of pseudonyms in Kierkegaard's writings presents the biggest ethical problem to the Kierkegaard scholar. Kierkegaard himself made it quite clear how he wanted to be quoted. He wished the scholar to put the pseudonym under each quote, or Kierkegaard as this or that pseudonym. He felt himself that each persona springing from each pseudonym was different from himself and from all the other personae. His pseudonyms are abundant and it is not always evident what kind of character attaches to it. One pseudonym for instance is 'H.H.' (*Two Minor*

Ethical-Religious Essays (1849).³ It is not easy to imagine this persona, no clue is given. On the other hand, *Constantin Constantius* is aptly the pseudonym for *The Repetition*.⁴ *Prefaces* came out under the pseudonym *Nicolaus Notabene* in 1844.⁵ This also seems indicative. The more debatable *Johannes Climacus* and *Anti-Climacus* [*Anticlimacus* in Danish] have been carefully explained by Kierkegaard (See Chapter 4). Some Kierkegaard scholars claim they can tell which pseudonym is talking from just one page of a work. Such a test is not necessarily proof of different voices, like characters in a play, because one soon learns to recognize the subject matter of each work as well as the author-name, although many of the works promote ideas already treated in earlier works. There is no work essentially contradicting any other works. In *Either/Or*, there is some dialogue and a small cast, such as one can find in a novel, but the pseudonym, *Victor Eremita*, is the puppet master. Here, the pseudonyms are not perceived as different characters but as facets of the same author, and different moods of one person. Some works are more humorous than others, e.g. *Concluding*

Unscientific Postscript. The religious works, such as the *Upbuilding Discourses* and *Works of Love*, were published in Kierkegaard's own name. Kierkegaard's brother breached instructions and was admonished in a letter:

Finally, it seems to me that you ought to modify your statements about me, both for your own sake and for mine. If what you have said is to be approximately right, it has to be said about a couple of my pseudonyms. It does not exactly fit me as the author of *Upbuilding Discourses* (my essential, named productivity, which is after all voluminous enough).⁶

This could not be more explicit: 'If you want to quote me, quote my religious works, those under my own name. If you quote a pseudonym, say so.' It seems Kierkegaard himself felt that he 'spoke in character' when he used a pseudonym and that this pseudonym might well express views not entirely the same as his own.

Kierkegaard provided two addenda to his *Postscript (Concluding Unscientific Postscript = CUP)*.⁷ One was headed: "The Understanding with the Reader", the other: "A First and Last Explanation". Saying to his 'dear Reader' that Johannes Climacus is a humorist, he declares:

when someone nowadays says: I know

everything, then he is believed. However, anyone who says: there is much I do not know, he is suspected of a tendency to lie.⁸

He is referring to his own main criticism of Hegel, who he thought had said: 'Here is my system, it is perfect!' It constitutes his most weighty reason for using pseudonyms. He did not want to say about himself that he was perfect. He set up ideal demands for morality and faith, but he did not want anyone to think he thought he himself could live up to them, or to be telling others what to think and feel. He did not want the author to come between text and reader. The names he chose for his pseudonyms were almost all obviously invented, i.e. a non-person, a vacuum. However, he wrote *Works of Love* in his own name and the demands raised in that work were of the highest, most idealistic kind. Did he really think that ethical demands were tougher than religious ones? Hardly! In the second addendum, he explains the most important pseudonyms. In a way, he comes clean, dispelling any doubts as to the authorship of his main works. He claims ownership of them. At the same time, he says it could not have any interest for anyone. He means, it *should* not interest anyone, since nothing matters except

the text itself. He says:

For I am impersonally or personally
in the third person a prompter
[Souffleur (Fr.)] who has
poetically produced authors, whose
Prefaces are again their
production; yes, whose names are
that. Thus there is in the
pseudonymous books not a single
word of mine. I have no opinion
about them except as a third
person.⁹

Kierkegaard goes on to stress what he put in his
letter to Peter:

My wish, my plea, is therefore
that, should it occur to anyone to
want to cite a single statement
from the book, one would do me the
favour to quote the name of the re-
spective pseudonymous author, not
mine, i.e. divide between us in
such a way that the statement
femininely belongs to the
pseudonym, the responsibility to
me, civilly.¹⁰

It strikes one today that such a metaphor is
slightly paternal, with the strong male shoul-
dering any responsibility so that the female can
be dreamy, charming and silly, but the female
here is his own writing. It is a confusing
picture, but the main message is that pseudonyms
should be quoted under the pseudonym and not
under Kierkegaard's own name.

Each scholar must consider this request on
his own. One could say that the pseudonyms now

come between the reader and the text as the reader tries to figure out what guise Kierkegaard has now used as camouflage. A pseudonym is not nothing, as 'Anonymous' would have been. No one wants to ride roughshod over the deceased author's wishes but one cannot blindly follow paradoxical last requests either. Perhaps the time has come after all to leave the responsibility to the one who is 'civilly' in charge? Ultimately, someone has to be and if the purpose is to leave the reader alone with the text, the pseudonym is best kept out of the equation.

In the above, some problems have been presented in connection with the pseudonyms and their role. It has been shown that Kierkegaard's directions with regard to quotations were sometimes self-contradictory and self-defeating. The advice must be to quote carefully with accurate and detailed references and only to mention pseudonyms where they are relevant and necessary for the understanding.

Legitimacy of Using the Papers

To avoid the dilemma over the pseudonyms, one may turn to the *Papers* as a source of bare quotations. Kierkegaard wrote much on separate pieces of paper and many were un-dated. There is therefore a problem with dating, but modern techniques have facilitated analysis of ink and paper and this has helped more accurate dating, especially after the current publication of the *Papers* and the *Works* entitled *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* [Søren Kierkegaard's Writings].¹¹

The published *Papers* are divided into groups A, B, C. 'A' denotes diary note, 'B' draft material, and 'C' lecture notes. However, phrases from the diary might well find their way into a *Work* or two. The separation between groups, therefore, is quite fluid. It is not easy to know, either, where a phrase first came down on paper, in the *Work* or in the diary. So, there is only a partial escape from the pseudonyms in the *Papers*, even within Group A. (Some editions may differ.)

One objection to using the *Papers* as a source has been that it constituted an invasion

of privacy. That objection can easily be refuted because Kierkegaard, aware of his own fame, edited his notebooks. Already in 1847, aged 34, he revised his earlier diaries,¹² and he regularly did so afterwards. He also began to use his diary as a place to proclaim his stand on this or that issue. He gave each piece a title, almost a headline. In places, pages have been cut out and removed. It is also clear from the contents that some issues of great importance to Kierkegaard are unrepresented. Many scholars have noticed the absence of material about his mother, compared with the abundance of material on his father. There is a possibility that the family did some of the cutting out of pages and removal of other papers, and not Kierkegaard himself. Kierkegaard's niece, Henriette Lund, wrote about the clearing up of his flat after his death, *en passant*:

Another one of those sad leave-taking days in Gl.Torv [Old Square], when more was burnt and destroyed than I would find necessary now in a calmer time,¹³

There is no doubt that much was lost to Kierkegaard scholarship in those days when the family perhaps thought more about its own

immediate reputation than about Kierkegaard's freedom of speech. One has to be grateful that so much was preserved and transcribed and printed but remember that what one has today is not all. Another bias was introduced into the editing of the *Papers*, and that was Emil Boesen's concern that Kierkegaard might have written unfavourably about Martensen. He wrote in a letter to H.P. Barfod (the editor) in 1869:

Should there in S.K.'s *Papers* be attacks on Martensen, then I think it would be unwelcome to Martensen to see them printed; what S.K. himself has wanted to say publicly in the way of attack on him, is after all already to be found in print.¹⁴

Boesen, Kierkegaard's friend from childhood among the Herrnhuttern, was then Archdeacon in the Jutland town of Aarhus.¹⁵ It is likely that Søren Kierkegaard's brother Peter, Bishop in Aarhus, thought this a good idea as well and that some curbing took place, but certainly some of these attacks stayed in, perhaps because they had already been published and so could not be taken back.

These are some of the concerns about the reliability of the *Papers*. Although there is a full translation of the *Papers* into English

underway, there is currently only a selection available which is about a third of the length of the Danish original. It is therefore not possible to judge the volume of material on one issue in this translation by counting instalments. Repetitions have been left out and material already published in the *Works* has also been left out. It will become clear that when it comes to anti-Semitic remarks, many quotations used in this discussion were not included in the existing translation. This will serve also as evidence that although various people took things out of the papers before publication for whatever reasons, no one felt ashamed of the anti-Semitism in them, for the quantity of this kind of material is enormous.

The pseudonyms will not be included here, unless they need to be emphasized for the sake of the argument, but they can easily be traced via the *Notes*. The style of writing is the same in everything Kierkegaard wrote, the idiosyncratic language, and as Hannay puts it in his large biography:

It is indeed true that Kierkegaard is unmistakably present in almost all of his writings.¹⁶

It is a cautious philosopher who puts in an opt-out clause in the shape of an "almost". There is, however, no need for such caution here. Kierkegaard's style and language were his signature!

Hearsay Evidence

Kierkegaard's response to those, who say the life does not matter, only the work does, is paradoxically (given his views on the *nom de plume*) this:

It can be seen here again, how endlessly important it is in relation to the Christian [element] to take the Preacher along. Because Luther's teaching on faith, *that* one took - but Luther's life, *that* one forgot.¹⁷

Since that is his view, he could not oppose the scrutinizing of his own life, as is the case here. However, when it comes to deeds, one has to rely on various sources. First of all, there is his own account of what he did on one occasion, as for instance a meeting between Kierkegaard and Goldschmidt in the street. There is Kierkegaard's account and also Goldschmidt's. One can compare the two and both are first-hand accounts. Then there is the third-party witness, who was present and heard every

word, saw every movement. After that comes the account of the person who spoke to the eye-witness, and the person who spoke to the person who spoke to the eye-witness, etc. With every removal from the agent, the account becomes less accurate and one moves into the region of 'hearsay evidence'. One could choose to accept all available accounts, or one could limit the field to agent's account and eye-witness account. The latter option has been chosen here and one story in several versions about Kierkegaard will follow to illustrate the kind of inaccuracies one encounters otherwise. This story is about Kierkegaard's so-called psychological experimentation on other people especially his fiancée. These stories are told by many people in writing and some are even today part of Danish folklore, the oral tradition. There are many more.

One of the first articles on Kierkegaard's "worrying" attitude to Jews was published in the first number of *Kierkegaardiana* in 1955. It was written by K. Bruun Andersen. Its centre piece is a dubious story about Kierkegaard being rude to a Jew. (See Chapter 7 where the

story is quoted in full.) But racism is a serious accusation and anecdotal evidence is not good enough.

Before telling the story, it has to be emphasized that Kierkegaard's fiancée, Regine Schlegel (née Olsen), in an interview after the death of both her husband and Kierkegaard, stated through the interviewer that,

It has to be said and emphasized that S.Kierkegaard has never used your [Regine's] love in order to torment you or to make mental experiments on you, such as it has been commonly but erroneously assumed.¹⁸

This is very noble of her, for Kierkegaard himself made it known in letters to his friend Emil Boesen and in his journals that he deliberately tried to put Regine off him so as to make the separation easier for her to bear. He did this by behaving in a brusque and seemingly insensitive way. One could call this manipulation of the highest order.

However, half of the stories are about a drive in a hired carriage northwards. The other half concerns an evening at the theatre. The principle is the same: a promise raises

expectations, only to be dashed at the last moment.

Kierkegaard describes in his *Papers* how he gave the neighbour's daughter a lift back to the city in his carriage and as he dropped her off, he said jokingly: 'We must do it again tomorrow'. Great was his surprise when the young woman turned up the next day ready for a repetition of the drive.

The story found its way into the *Works* and G. Pattison describes how:

...there are other excursions from Copenhagen that also throw a more or less clear light on the quest for repetition.

For example, Constantin describes how on one occasion, while travelling in the country, far from Copenhagen, he was approached by a "young pretty girl" who boldly but confidently and with no trace of coquetry but "genuine womanly decency" requested a lift back to the city. He is favourably impressed by her manner and comments that such a girl "who does not wish for the interesting, she believes in repetition. All honour to the one, who was originally thus, all honour to the one, who remained thus through time".¹⁹

So far, so good, but then follows the folklore; Garff writes, referring to Kirmmse, who refers

to Steen Johansen:-

The broken engagement was soon common knowledge in the town [Copenhagen] and it made people talk. Rumour would have it that one night Regine had been invited to the theatre, to *Don Juan*, but no sooner was the overture over before Kierkegaard rose saying: "We are leaving now. You have had the best part, the joy of anticipation!"

However,

When Julius Clausen many years later cautiously presented Regine with this story, she said: "Oh yes, I well remember that evening; but it was after the first act that we left, because he had a strong headache".²⁰

Regine's explanation normalizes the story and makes it quite uninteresting. However, Goldschmidt has a more sensational take on the story:

Thus he is said to have once brought his fiancée to the theatre to hear Mozart's *Don Juan* and after a few bars of the overture, led her away again with the comment that this was sufficient: within those bars was, to the correct perception, contained the entire opera, or there was enough there for the correct atmosphere. Mood, to get into the mood, that seemed to be the real matter of life!²¹

That certainly puts the drama back in, to use the words of Hans Christian Andersen: 'a small feather had become five hens'. Here, only 'a few bars' of the overture were heard, not the

whole overture, not the overture plus the first act. The poor girl is expected to have 'entered into the correct mood' making the rest of the opera superfluous. The cruelty and arrogance of such a gesture would have been intolerable had it been true.

This particular story was in circulation as late as 1975 in Copenhagen when the writer of this thesis met an old woman who in her youth had been invited to the theatre by her new husband, only to find herself all dressed up, waiting for him to come and pick her up - for the whole evening! When he finally showed up, he told her, he had been, but as the joy of anticipation was the greatest, there was no need to take her. This copy-cat action illustrates, apart from a shocking gullibility on the part of the young husband, the power of example of certain philosophers. Had the action been an anti-Semitic gesture, it might equally have been imitated by young people keen to show themselves 'cool' and 'with it'.

With regard to the drive, Garff continues:

Henrik Hertz mixes in with the choir of outraged voices and can tell the following story about "the young, pretty Miss Olsen", whom Kierkegaard "nearly tortured to death with his peculiarities": "One day, he picked her up in a carriage [*Wienervogn*] for a trip into the countryside, at which she was indescribably happy. However, at the round-about at *Vesterbro* [West Bridge], he turned around and drove her home again, in order that she might accustom herself to denying herself a pleasure. He deserved a spanking of his bottom because of that!"²²

Here is another sadistic treatment of the pretty, young woman, the fatherly teacher abusing his authority. Kierkegaard's secretary, Israel Levin, recounted a similar story to the interviewer Fibiger whose account went into the Steen Johansen collection of interviews with people who knew Kierkegaard directly and then into Kirmmse's enlargement of it. It is hardly first- or second-hand but still more reliable than the Hertz story above:

I once said: "That was an excellent trip. It only seems to me insufficient. I wish I could do it all over". "Done!" said K. "See if the carriage is still there." But the carriage had driven off. "Then come again tomorrow at - - o'clock". I returned the next morning. "No, nothing can come of that today." - "But the amusement - I was looking forward to it." "Aah, you have had all the amusement. The pleasure lies in the anticipation, yesterday evening you were looking forward to it, you

dreamt about it last night, you were looking forward to it this morning, on your way here. You have had enough amusement".²³

This is also a sadistic story, not too different from Kierkegaard's own version, but Levin's story has got that extra twist which makes it so. His own story, the one in the *Papers* and the one in the *Works*, is slightly ironic, reflecting on the amazing innocence to be found in young women, but, most importantly, the situation is *not* planned, it happens by accident, or his own careless empty promise, really meant as a joke.

These stories should serve as a warning not to jump at any story, fourth or fifth hand, that would help one's argument. They are not safe.

Below will follow some definitions of anti-Semitism and the choice of a working definition. Later, will come the applications.

Definitions of Anti-Semitism

Choosing a Working Model

In order to establish whether a person is a criminal or not, one has to find out if she has broken the law, and again, to do that, one must look at what the law says. So it is with anti-Semitism. One could even talk about a 'case law', a few test cases that set the standard for the judging of other cases. To judge whether Søren Kierkegaard was an anti-Semite, one will need a 'law', i.e. a definition of such a 'moral crims'. One could approach this task in two ways, a negative or a positive way.

What Constitutes an Action?

Kierkegaard himself does not talk about 'doing good' versus 'doing evil', he talks about 'willing the good' or 'failing to will the good'. One can fail to will the good by omission. A person who is not excellent is not necessarily incompetent, he just has not made the top mark, whether he tried or not. In Kierkegaard's world 'trying' can be enough. A

father who attempts to do the best for his son may harm him more than any enemy or rival. Still, morally, the father succeeds and the son may perceive that the intention was the best possible. Another father might fail by default, he neither willed the good, nor thought about it. Time passed and it became too late. Perhaps he was busy with his own pursuits and ambitions. He did not 'will' his own son any harm, and he did him no harm, but he failed to will the best for him. He failed by omission. This is the negative way. One could also call it 'the passive way'. The positive, or 'the active way' is to look for an 'act', or 'action'.²⁴ There are different camps in the Philosophy of Action, but generally, an 'act' is defined by its causal link into the future. Saying: 'I decided to do nothing', there is no causal link to the future, but the decision was caused by past events. Remembering Kierkegaard's position in the *Corsair Affair*, mentioned in Chapter 2 above, it can be noted that he often thought about things and decided 'to do nothing'. The result was an 'absence' of action:

A. Have I in any way benefited from
my relationship with Bishop

Mynster?

B. Has not Bishop Mynster on the contrary had even considerable advantages from my relationship with him.

a) I have...

c) taken upon myself tasks which he ought to have resolved (*The Corsair*).

...

e) put up with the fact that my proclamation of Christianity, which is far truer than his, counted for exaggeration because his was Christian wisdom. Put up with it, yes, even contributed to it. I who was the only one who could have opposed Mynster.²⁵

In this quote, Kierkegaard states how he deliberately 'put up' with something, i.e. he did nothing. He who was the person best placed and equipped to oppose the Bishop, decided 'to do nothing'. There are many other such examples in Kierkegaard's *Journals*, not least in the matter of Adler, the vicar who claimed to have had divine revelations. Here Kierkegaard decides not to attack by writing a book against him.²⁶ He writes about the principles involved in the case rather than the individual. It seems that 'making a decision' which leads to action or inaction and thus influences the course of life, ought to be considered a

positive action regardless of the nature of that decision. There may not be 'a causal link' to the future but there is an influence. In other words, can thoughts be actions? Can there be 'thought-actions', as there are actions and speech-actions? In the example above, there is clearly a similar decision to do nothing on the part of Mynster. He did not step in against *The Corsair*. He also did not keep up his end of a relationship from which he benefited, according to Kierkegaard. In this case, inaction actually causes hurt. An omission here has a causal link. One could think of many such examples of a decision to do nothing having an effect on the world. It is of course also possible to hurt by default or by an unavoidable action, in which case there is no decision and no intent but a causal link. There is a legal expression, 'without malice', harm is done but was not intended. Such a finding would have implications for the judgement and sentencing of a defendant.

These ideas of what constitutes an action, what is the law, and when is a person responsible for breaking that law, are the tools

necessary when the question is: Was Kierkegaard an anti-Semite? Some people would say that only positive, physical, actions against the person can be called anti-Semitism, others include 'speech-acts' (the words 'act' and 'action' are used interchangeably here), i.e. calling people names like 'Yid' or 'Dirty Jew' with clear intent to hurt and harm. There is a saying which goes like this: 'Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never harm me'. Words can have a profound psychological effect, and they can signify to society that this person is not 'one of us', he can be harmed and no one will defend him. They can lead directly to physical violence. It will be argued in this thesis that although one cannot police people's minds, there can be such a thing as a 'thought-crime'. One might say that it would be fair to judge a person by his own rules and if in Christianity adultery can be committed in the mind, so anti-Semitism can be committed in the mind.

The Religious Perspective

Kierkegaard makes it clear in his *Works of Love*

that every person is one's neighbour and one must love one's neighbour, no matter how different. The greater the difference, the greater the challenge to live up to Christianity's most central tenet. Another rule that Kierkegaard stresses again and again, is that the individual is individually responsible and can never be exempted under the pretext that he acted within a group which had made up its own rules. Therefore, excuses such as 'He acted under orders', or 'In his day, they all did it' cannot be valid. Copenhagen, as has been mentioned above, in Chapter 1 was not in the 1840s and 50s a cesspool of hatred towards Jews, but even if it were, according to Kierkegaard's own rules, it would not matter. The neighbour must be loved.

Who is a Jew and Where is the Jew?

The anti-Semite has to know who is a Jew. Is it anyone who in the blonde Scandinavia looks dark and Oriental? Anyone who does not eat pork? Anyone who goes to the Synagogue? Or is it just rumour? Kierkegaard does not seem aware of, or concerned about, the Jews' own definition: that

a Jew is anyone born to a Jewish mother, or anyone who has undergone a conversion. History has shown that anti-Semitism can thrive where there are no Jews. It seems almost obvious since with no Jews present, any lie will be believed. There is no one to disprove it, and disproving it does not seem very necessary. Daniel Goldhagen(1996) writes:

Antisemitism tells us nothing about Jews, but much about antisemites and the culture that breeds them. ... Classically, no matter what the object does, whether "X" or "not X", the bigot defames him for it.²⁷

This observation that whatever the Jew does, it will be wrong, can also be made in relation to Kierkegaard's criticism of Goldschmidt's use of his talent on what Kierkegaard regarded as the gutter-press. When Goldschmidt subsequently 'cleaned-up his act' selling *The Corsair* and starting a more serious and respectable magazine, *Nord og Syd* [North and South], Kierkegaard criticized him for that as well, scathingly commenting:

If suddenly the religious interest were to take a huge upswing, I should think it will end with Goldschmidt starting a magazine for domestic prayer, Christian ingatherer and such-like, in his capacity as tradesman.²⁸

Either way, Goldschmidt cannot get it right by Kierkegaard and yet he wanted it so much. Goldhagen continues:

People who have never met Jews have believed that Jews were agents of the Devil. ... England from 1290 to 1656 is a striking, but by no means rare, example of this phenomenon. During this period, it was virtually *judenrein*, purged of Jews, the English having expelled them...still, the culture of England remained deeply and thoroughly antisemitic.

...

...As part of the moral system of English society, antisemitism remained integral to the standing and sway of Christianity, even when no Jews were in England, even when the people of England had never met any actual Jews.²⁹

Goldhagen refers to a Bernard Glassman who wrote a book entitled: *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes Without Jews*.³⁰ Denmark in the 1840s had 4000 Jews of whom the majority were settled in the capital; 2465, to be precise. (See Chapter 1). Copenhagen then had a population of between 100,000 and 120,000, but as a lady opined about London, when reminded that the black population nationwide is very small, even today: 'It does not matter, if they all live in your street and you can no longer sell your house'. Kierkegaard too did not concern himself with statistics.

The 'Doing' vs. The 'Saying'

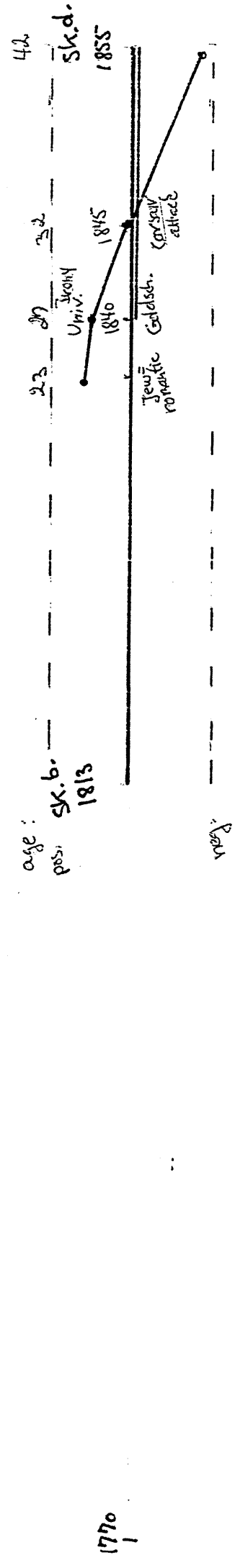
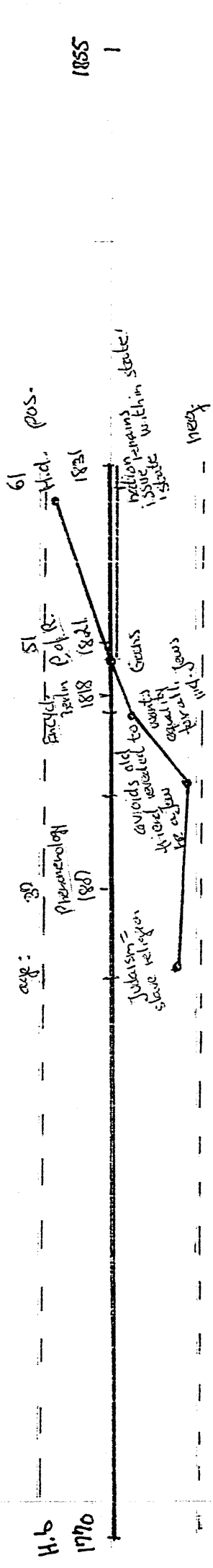
The philosopher is judged on her speech-acts as well as her acts, i.e. her life. Purists, and the whole school of de-construction, argue that only the words matter. The biography and the influences or connections are of no importance, the work speaks for itself and preferably without footnotes. Many Kierkegaard scholars support that view and say that it is the ideas that matter. However, Kierkegaard himself did not belong to that school and he strongly argued that the life is eloquent and the 'doing' is often more important than the 'saying', especially religiously. It is the position of this thesis that the life must also be examined to help one form a complete picture of the man, who after all is trying to teach his world how to live. One may imagine philosophers of a different kind where the biography is of less importance, but it cannot be of no importance. Few people argue, for instance, that Socrates' death was of no importance for his philosophy! He was himself the first to weigh up the political and academic consequences of a possible execution.³¹ Of course, one can understand his philosophy without the 'life', but his

death was an expression of his philosophy as much as his words. In daily life, acts are judged more important than words and thoughts, although one can be judged guilty through omission as much as through commission. Imagine a person who knowingly did not prevent a house-fire, with loss of life. In philosophy, this order is often reversed, so that words weigh more heavily than actions.

It is interesting to compare, graphically, the Semitic 'barometer' of Kierkegaard with the one of Hegel (See graph, Fig.1). They did not live at the same time, or in the same country, but they were both deeply influenced, negatively or positively, by one person, a Jew, and from that one relationship did they both generalize onto all Jews, hardly fair or scientific. Hegel started off almost as negatively as one possibly could, calling Judaism a slave religion pre-occupied with Law and devoid of Love. According to Pinkard,

The result was a "spirit" that *wedded itself* to bondage, that embodied a self-incurred subservience. As Hegel puts it, the claim that "there is one God" becomes equivalent to "there is one master, for whom we are the bondsmen". 32

1780



1 year = 0.32 cm

EW
17/2/05

Terry Pinkard continues in his notes:

Hegel's discussion of the relation of Christianity to Judaism and his clearly negative attitude toward Judaism at this period in his development - an attitude that changed dramatically in his later life- was clearly linked to Kant's own discussions of Judaism in his religious writings.³³

Upon this negative attitude, Hegel was fully prepared to act. It is incumbent on a philosopher, moral and otherwise, to bring actions and theories together. Thus, when he discovered that one of his old friends had Jewish origins, he immediately cooled the relationship.³⁴ However, his rationalistic belief in *Liberté*, *Égalité*, *Fraternité* took him to the view that everyone, even Jews, deserves equality. It did not prevent him from writing thus in a letter of 1814:

May God only grant us not to be so stiff-necked as that dearly beloved people of His; and not to have to...carry around as many lice with us and even be scattered from the promised land of German-dumb into particularisms.³⁵

Did he think he was stating facts? Or did he forget to respect his fellow man? Only four years later, 1818, did he at last obtain a post in Berlin and it was here he met the man, Eduard Gans, a Jew, around 1821, who was to send his graph skywards, from negative to positive.

Hegel supported his application for a professorship at the Faculty of Law but it met with considerable resistance from above and Hegel saw for himself the lack of *égalité* meted out to an eminently capable candidate on the sole ground that he was an 'alien'. It was 'felt' that he would not be able to administer pastoral care to his students, as a non-Christian. Since the Law did not prevent such an appointment, pretexts had to be found. Hegel had already written in his *Philosophy of Right*, published in 1821, that:

to be true to themselves, modern states were rationally compelled to grant full emancipation to Jews and not to make this emancipation conditional on their conversion to Christianity₃₆

although he qualified this:

So, too states have had a formal right, against the Jews in regard to the concession to them of even civil rights, because they are not merely a religious body, but claim to look upon themselves as a foreign nation.

This remains Hegel's last and insurmountable problem with Jews and Judaism. 'The state within the state' could at any time activate and become a lethal danger to the host. In principle, this was, of course, a possibility,

but in reality it would have required larger numbers than even German Jews could muster. This footnote is an ambivalent piece of writing, for it gives, then takes back, and then gives again. Hegel smoothes out after the above statement:

But the outcry raised against them on this and other grounds has overlooked the fact that they are first of all men, and that to be a man is more than a superficial abstract qualification.³⁷

This bottom line, that everyone is a human being, completely tallies with Kierkegaard's statement in *Works of Love*, that no one can be excluded from the human race.³⁸ Hegel visited two synagogues in Amsterdam and is today regarded by Jews as possibly the only Western philosopher of that time with a proper understanding of Judaism. So, throughout his lifetime, Hegel moved from a totally negative attitude to a near totally positive one. As with Kierkegaard, it was through the relationship with one person, one Jew, that their curve took a sharp turn, either up or down. It is hard to say if that person was a catalyst or a full agent, but it took only one person.

Racism in General - A Black Perspective

Although black/white racism is in many ways quite different from Jew/Gentile racism, this phenomenon that one person can influence another, as representative of the other side, negatively or positively, can also be found in the life curve of the black, homosexual writer, James Baldwin who was indoctrinated in the home by his father to think Jews inferior to Christians, even black Christians, because they had not been 'saved'. He nevertheless went to a predominantly Jewish high school:

I was in a high school that was predominantly Jewish. This means that I was surrounded by people who were, by definition, beyond any hope of salvation...

The fact that I was dealing with Jews brought the whole question of color, which I had been desperately avoiding, into the terrified center of my mind. I realized that the Bible had been written by white men...

I knew that, according to many Christians, I was a descendant of Ham, who had been cursed, and that I was therefore predestined to be a slave.³⁹

It is hard to imagine a more uncomfortable blend of superiority and inferiority complexes, arrogance and fear and he is in danger of losing the

one thing that keeps him together, namely, the Bible. He adds about the Holocaust:

White people were, and are, astounded by the holocaust in Germany. They did not know that they could act that way. But I very much doubt whether black people were astounded - at least in the same way...I could not but feel, in those sorrowful years, that this human indifference, concerning which I knew so much already, would be my portion on the day that the United States decided to murder its Negroes systematically.⁴⁰

This is certainly a different 'take' on Jews and the Holocaust. It is strange to see all 'white people' made responsible for Nazi atrocities: 'They did not know that they could act that way'. 'But we were not surprised, we black people'. The Jew, to Baldwin's mind, is first and foremost a 'white man':

The Jew is recognized as a contributor to the world's history: this is not true for the blacks.⁴¹

And then comes a little *cadeau* to Kierkegaard:

One may become reconciled to the ruin of one's own life, but to become reconciled to the ruin of one's children's lives is not reconciliation. *It is sickness unto death.*⁴² [emphasis added]

It is not precisely as Kierkegaard meant it, though. Here is the little black school boy, filled with hatred for white people, and along comes:

a young white schoolteacher, a beautiful woman, very important to me. I was between ten and eleven...She gave me books to read and talked to me about the books, and about the world...and took me to see plays and films...I loved her, of course. It is certainly partly because of her...that I never really managed to hate white people₄₃

Again, one person could turn the curve upwards. Baldwin later became close friends with Norman Mailer, a Jew, whom he gave the honorific title of 'white Negro'. The hatred instilled in the child here was backed up with quotes from the Bible, but he also experienced first hand racial discrimination. However, the irrational hatred was met by a love as random and irrational and it made it impossible for him to 'really hate white people' ever after. His curve probably never went as high as Hegel's when it came to the abstract idea, although in the individual relationship, he did well. But the power of the one person in the life of another, for good or bad, confirms Kierkegaard's own emphasis on the 'single individual'. As a Jew might say: 'When you save one person, you save the whole world'. No person is too unimportant, no person is unimportant.

Seeking a Definition in Virtue Ethics

In the text above, some action theory has been vented and the idea of graph-making has been introduced, but it still remains to establish a working definition of anti-Semitism to be used in this dissertation. Is the zero-line perhaps the state of mind where one neither hates, nor loves, Jews, where one is entirely indifferent to the whole question? That would not seem a very virtuous place to be. The very word 'virtuous' may be a lead to another avenue in the search. Rosalind Hursthouse, in her book *On Virtue Ethics* argues that from a neo-Aristotelian point of view, every person should ask 'What sort of person should I be?' and then 'Would such a person do x?' In other words, the agent comes before the action. If 'tolerance' is classified as a virtue, 'tolerance' should be part of the person I should be and I should carry out tolerant acts. So, how do I know what constitutes a tolerant act? Well, this has to be learned through trial and error and watching more experienced people. Hursthouse acknowledges that Virtue Ethics is not strong on telling one what to do. However, certain qualities in a society are agreed to be virtuous, which does

beg the question, and there is a constant argument going on as to what should be considered a virtue. If a society decides that 'racial hygiene' is desirable and therefore all acts leading to that end will be considered 'virtuous', the agent has no anchor, no resistance. She says that the most common critique of Virtue Ethics is: "'Virtue ethics does not provide us with moral guidance'", and responds:

- how can it fail to, when it has provided a specification of right action? Sometimes people suspect that it has provided only a circular specification, not a specification that we could use to guide us. "It has told us that the right action is what a virtuous agent would do. But that is a truism. Of course the virtuous agent 'does what is right'; if she didn't, she wouldn't be virtuous; we are just going round in circles."⁴⁴

It does indeed look like a 'circular argument'. Hursthouse admits that she will be spending most of her book trying to answer this question. She does address the problem of Nazism in Germany and its anti-Semitism:

It is extraordinarily difficult to determine when someone is to count as having embraced the wicked beliefs of a society, or religion, or cult, and when they can count as just, so to speak, having been landed with them. But difficult as

it may be to do, and admitting that many cases are simply indeterminate, we can sometimes draw a distinction between views and attitudes prevalent in a society that any ordinarily decent person within it could reasonably be expected to see through, and those that only exceptional and extraordinary people might see through.⁴⁵

That could seem a bit 'elitist' and surely, ethics are there to provide support for the young and those lacking 'moral fibre'. The defence is vague and messy, but since the system attempts to bring emotions into philosophy, it is worth holding on and trying to keep searching for a firmer framework. Rosalind Hursthouse continues:

One reason, I take it, that we judge the Nazis so severely is that, although it might well take a quite exceptional person to see through the anti-Semitism so well entrenched at the time (in the U.K. and U.S. as well as in Germany and Austria), there was nothing entrenched about the idea that it would be just policy to start drawing distinctions between the legal rights of your country's citizens on grounds of race, let alone the idea that it was consistent with compassion and justice [i.e. 'virtues'] to put them in concentration camps and slaughter them. Anyone reasonably decent in Europe at the time, however anti-Semitic their upbringing, was able to see that that was wrong.⁴⁶

But can one really insist on 'extraordinary people' while attacking racism? It seems

dangerous ground. The word 'just' here is a key word referring back to John Rawls and his 'just laws for a just society'.⁴⁷

Seeking a Definition in Rawls and Cohen

In his book *The Law of Peoples*, Rawls addresses the relationship between groups, not individuals. He mentions anti-Semitism and the need for tolerance, even of less liberalism than one's own. He does not define anti-Semitism, because he is seeking to define the good, not the bad. His quest is 'the ideal society' or as he terms it 'the realistic utopia'. The law should offer the maximum liberty to everyone. This, argued G.A.Cohen (2000), was not enough. There had to be an ethos of justice as well:

consider access to that primary good which Rawls calls "the social basis of self-respect". While the law may play a large role in securing that good to people vulnerable to racism, legally unregulable racist attitudes also have an enormous negative impact on how much of that primary good they get.⁴⁸

Think of the only child in the class not invited to a private party, or the employee ignored in the corridors. These are omissions, non-acts,

and they are not criminal in the ordinary sense, yet they are deeply damaging and excruciatingly painful. If the person consistently ignored and overlooked were Jewish, one might have an example of anti-Semitism, but not a definition.

Seeking a Definition in the Oxford English Dictionary

The Oxford English Dictionary simply states that to be 'anti-Semitic' is to be 'hostile to Jews' or 'prejudiced against Jews'.⁴⁹ It sounds so clear and obvious, but if a person A lets a door slam into the face of the person B who comes right after and who happens to be Jewish, where-as A is a non-Jew, how can it be established: 1) that A knew B was Jewish, 2) that A disliked Jews, 3) that A was prepared to act on his pre-judice, 4) that A did act on his prejudice? Does 'being hostile' involve only outright actions, or speech-acts and thought-acts too?

In our time, there is a shared, unstated premise in the presumption that anti-Semitism is necessarily a bad thing. Cultures will always compete and try to extinguish each other, whether they say so or not. No one would like

to see their culture subdued by another. The anecdote goes that the lady of the aristocracy instructs the young girl: 'We invite them for tea, but we do not marry them', regarding 'foreigners'. Can that be regarded a prejudice? Is it not rather a pragmatic attitude? But say she wanted to preserve and protect her culture in the same way Jews do, by cautioning their young against inter-marriage; after all, whole worlds have vanished in the past because of too much tolerance?⁵⁰ Kierkegaard's many hostile pronouncements about Judaism, Jews and individual Jews assume agreement about the premise that it is all right, maybe even a patriotic duty, to proclaim the superiority of Christianity and unabashedly point out perceived inferiorities in Judaism, or any other 'foreign' religion.

Kierkegaard never uses the term 'anti-Semitism', 'anti-Semitic'. Nonetheless, this thesis sets out to show that Kierkegaard was an anti-Semite. It will assume that this is a negative term, although one could philosophically defend the position that it is value-neutral, as is indicated above. Goldhagen argues that

anti-Semitism is always irrational, but seen from the point of view of a social Darwinian, it is superbly rational to seek to suppress others in the fight for survival.

Inborn Tolerance?

Hursthouse argues that children are naturally tolerant and only learn to be racists and to dislike children of another class:

Children have to be taught to fear, particularly adults of a different race; to hate and suspect and despise its younger members.⁵¹

Of course, this will depend on the child's stage of development, but a child mature enough to form its own opinions will shy away from adults and other children who look vastly different, who perhaps smell different and behave in a different way. It is then for the parents or guardians to reassure the child and teach it to appreciate difference. One can only build these opinions on empirical evidence, watching children's reactions. If they are not encouraged to make friends with children of another appearance, they will simply and cruelly avoid them and stick with their own, just as

adults tend to do. It would be unrealistic to deny that more mental agility is required for communication with people who are very different from oneself and one may feel too lazy, too tired, lacking the emotional surplus to bother. Kierkegaard initially as a young man approaches the subject of Judaism and especially the 'solitary Jew' with curiosity and imagination, but it is a kind of prurient *Schadenfreude* that makes it so much cosier to be inside and to belong than it was before, when one could feel a little bored and claustrophobic.

Motivation

It has been established that an act is only an act, it is the motivation, or the 'intent', that gives it a moral content, plus or minus. However, the mind is a secret place. It may even be secret from its owner. Thanks to Freud, it is now common knowledge that human beings have sub-conscious minds, they may deceive themselves and others may be more aware of their true motives for an action. Yet, they are responsible both for the hurt of their action and their ignorance about it. If a person shot

a friend by mistake, he would not be convicted as a murderer. Whereas, if he shot him deliberately, he would be. The action remains the same, and its consequence. Even 'word-acts' or 'speech-acts' may be deceptive. Reading Kierkegaard's *Journals*, for instance, one becomes more and more aware that the sense of privacy is evaporating, as the writer comes to the realization that he is now so famous that every scrap of paper he leaves behind will be made public.⁵² The earnest soul-searching turns into speech-making and self-justification. Although the same events are mulled over, the driving force has changed, perhaps partly without the author realizing it. Motivation, in other words, is as slippery as all the other ideas that might have provided a firm definition.

Anti-Semitism Sub-divided

Anti-Semitism can be divided into groups: there is the Biblical, the social and the biological. One can discuss the hierarchy of these and one could find more. The Biblical group tends to start off with valid and legitimate comparisons between Old and New Testament with a natural

preference of one's own, e.g. the New. This then veers over into a desire to always find in favour of one's own. The disinterested scientific approach gets a little biased. Then the counter-arguments move beyond the *Old* and the *New Testament* and instead of investigating unknown areas of the other religion, one jumps to conclusions without foundations. A competition has been set up and one wants to win. This goes for all three groups. There is a desire to win, to dominate and to blot out the Other. Once on that track, it seems an impossibility to shift back and just look for co-existence. There will be a selection of Kierkegaard quotes to illustrate these groups in the following two Chapters, but one of each group will be given here as an introduction.

Kierkegaard wrote the following in his Journal when he was 36:

The misfortune in Christendom...is that the imaginings of God's elevation, of Christ's elevation has become so limitless that it has become become fantastical, and that this can result in no real Christian life to speak of, but at the most a little Jewish piety.⁵³

This quote is typical of the mechanism whereby a

piece starts off seemingly very factual, even self-deprecating, i.e. 'Christendom [as opposed to 'Christianity', means 'the Christian society' or 'the Clergy'] has distorted the true Christianity and made the distance between man and God too great'. All right, so far so good, but then, 'There is a danger it might weaken the faith of the good Christian, so that it becomes - just a little Jewish piety'. The message is that all Jewish faith is 'a little Jewish piety [Fromhed]'. The word 'piety' itself has been degraded and devalued both by the word 'little' and the word 'Jewish'. Already, the word 'Jewish' is in Kierkegaard's terminology becoming a more general term of abuse and he ended up accusing the whole Danish Church of being 'Jewish', because it had in his opinion moved too far away from Christ and the Gospels, becoming over-concerned with earthly matters, 'like the Jews'. The quote above seems so scholarly, so scientific, but it is in fact an unfounded and untrue accusation. There is no proof that Jewish faith is any less worthy than Christian faith, the statement is an outright insult posing as knowledge imparted by someone who is well informed.

In the way of a social quotation, the one below is taken from Kierkegaard's 37th year. Although it can be difficult to separate off the religious element from examples of anti-Semitism of any group, the emphasis is here less on theory and more on the practical life in society. Kierkegaard is endlessly referring to Jews as 'pedlars' and one could end up with the impression that there were no wealthy and powerful Jews in Denmark then. This would be quite untrue. Much of Kierkegaard's family was employed by banks and they must have known that especially in banking were Danish Jews successful and wealthy enough to support poor artists such as H.C.Andersen (See Chapter 1 for more details). The quote here is particularly insidious:

The Evil (simply through despair) gives a desperate strength and lust for life (while the Good is longing to get out of life). I have shown how precisely the baptized Jews are good representatives for this kind of energy, because they more often than not have no religion at all and despairingly comprehend that they have been assigned only this life. It gives impetus.⁵⁴

Again, there is a seeming scholarly insight about it. It is almost 'proved' to the reader that although Jews might get themselves

baptized, Evil, in the shape of 'a lust for life', will out and that baptized Jews have no faith at all. In the year 2005, one can almost hear echoes of the current debate about 'genuine asylum-seekers' with its clever and ugly insinuations about the 'not so genuine asylum seekers'. Nowhere is there an acknowledgement of the possibility that individuals arrive on one's shores because they admire one's society and want to become part of it. No, 'these people are only out for the money, our money.' How Kierkegaard could pronounce, even generalize, on the state of mind of people with whom he had no direct contact, is hard to fathom. But this is a cultured, highly educated man speaking. His words carry weight and his papers, written at this stage with a view to publication posthumously, went through several editorships un-curtailed. They are, even today, potentially harmful, certainly hurt-ful if one is a Jew. Kierkegaard is in fact here forestalling the belonging the baptism ought to bring about by making its sincerity suspect. Chapter 4 below will go further into this area. Here it should just be pointed out that Kierkegaard's anti-Jewish remarks fall into

three main groups. The last one is perhaps the most serious one, but it is also the smallest group in terms of volume and frequency.

Biological anti-Semitism is directed at appearance, mainly the face. A stereotype is set up; dark eyes, skin, hair, small stature. In the Nordic country, with a largely blue-eyed, blond-haired, pale-skinned population of tall stature, this type was almost the opposite of the native one. One talked about 'Orientals' and a word like 'exotic' had a negative content, where today it is so positive that it is used in advertisement to denote the colourful, the interesting, the mysterious about anything from clothes to fruit juice. When Kierkegaard says 'exotic', he means 'bad', although he was an avid reader of *A Thousand and One Nights* (in the German translation) with illustrations in the form of drawings of precisely this type of person (See Chapter 1). However, biological anti-Semitism also covers areas such as inherent characteristics, for instance being of the Mediterranean type and therefore 'lively, passionate, lustful'. Anything that is 'other'

is negative, un-Danish. A Danish-Jewish congregation today looks much like a Christian one, as a result of much inter-marriage into the native population. This can be observed in most countries. There are Swedish Jews and Chinese Jews, American Jews. All look like the national stereotype. In Kierkegaard's time, the Semitic features were still preserved and could be viewed in the street. One could call this group of anti-Semitism 'genetic', but it is purely racial. Racism is a wider concept but here Jews endure the same prejudices as Africans, Asians and all others who look different because of where they or their parents came from. The fragment from Kierkegaard's *Journal* of 1846, quoted below, is only one illustration of this kind of negative generalization with little scientific trust-worthiness.

Like the organ of all the more southern nations (in particular Jews), all passionate nations' organ is such that the voice continuously breaks, just as every passionate person talks in this manner, so it is also possible stylistically to produce this effect.⁵⁵

One wonders where Kierkegaard had made this observation, he never travelled further south than Berlin. The writer, Kierkegaard, is

ostensibly neutrally occupied with this art, looking for a way of reproducing this sound-effect of the breaking voice, in writing. The premise that southern peoples, especially the Jews, talk themselves into such a state of hysteria that their voice breaks, is assumed shared, a common observation. It creates an image which is far from flattering. In another place, Kierkegaard writes, equally casually: "In the consciousness of the various nations, Jews are generally regarded as cowards".⁵⁶ So, some nations are brave, others, like the Jews, are not! In fact, they are not at this point seen as a nation, but at most 'a people'. If proof were needed, certainly, the emergence of a Jewish state and a Jewish army has shown the world otherwise. Then, Jews had been serving in the Danish army from around 1798 and after the *Battle on Kongedybet*, a Jew was honoured for bravery having joined up voluntarily. From 1809, Jews were conscripted like everyone else.⁵⁷ On what basis does Kierkegaard pronounce on behalf of 'various nations'? Again, there is a presumption of agreement and so the statement needs no justification, for none is offered, yet the statement is unsafe.

Improving the Definition

The Oxford University Press' definition of anti-Semitism, 'hostility towards Jews', needs an addition: 'baseless': 'anti-Semitism is baseless hostility towards Jews'. What has been shown above, has been again and again unfounded, hostile statements about Jews as a whole. Had there been substantial evidence for any of the hostile statements, one could have called them 'hostile to Jews', but not necessarily 'anti-Semitic'. If there is a good reason for finding against Jews, on whatever grounds, there can be no accusation of anti-Semitism. It is legitimate to make Biblical comparisons or social observations, but to state as fact personal, unproven, hostile, opinions about Jews, is anti-Semitism. His use as an insult of the word 'Jewish' against non-Jews, does not prove that Kierkegaard was no anti-Semite, as will be further discussed in Chapter 7. On the contrary, it is the epitome of besmirchment. One only has to substitute this adjective of nationality with that of another. Imagine the word 'Brit'

becoming a general term of insult on a par with the word 'Idiot': 'You..you..BRIT!!!' or 'He is all right, really, but a bit British...'. Then it becomes suddenly easier to understand. One could imagine random hostility towards a group of Jews that would not qualify as anti-Semitism, so the above suggestion cannot become 'a sufficient condition', only 'a necessary condition'. One could add 'because they are Jews', 'anti-Semitism is baseless hostility towards Jews because they are Jews', or 'as Jews' to veil the seeming incoherence between 'baseless' and 'because'. So: 'baseless hostility towards Jews as Jews'.

Summary

Philosophy has become separated from Religion in modern times and the idea of 'Do to others as you would be done by' now belongs solely to Religion. Yet the question, 'Would I like to be treated in the way I treat this other person?' is a very good moral compass. 'Would I like to be treated like a clone?', 'Would I like to have my personality denied and be treated as first and last inferior?' The answer is No. 'Would I

like to be treated as a "single individual responsible alone"? Then the answer is Yes. So, that is what I must give. *This* is surely Cohen's 'ethos of Justice'.

This Chapter has been a preparation for the rest of the thesis where more evidence of Kierkegaard's anti-Semitism will be presented and discussed, before addressing Kierkegaard's followers, including his exculpists. Hopefully, the above has shown some of the difficulties involved when one goes looking for a working definition, but also some of the issues, the idea of 'action', statistics as tools, graphs to show that they are not static, there is a life curve, Kierkegaard's curve compared with that of Hegel's, Baldwin, the racial debate, Hursthouse and Virtue Ethics, Rawls and Cohen, *The Oxford Dictionary's* definition and some suggested improvements, Biblical, social and biological as sub-divisions and examples from Kierkegaard's *Papers*. These things need to be kept in mind when going on to the next Chapter, and the rest.

Chapter 3

NOTES

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2. Goethe, J.W., (1749-1832), *Faust I & II* (1828 ... 2000) Reclam, Stuttgart, Ger. Vol. I (135 pp), Vol. II (219 pp). Part II, 11. 11936-7.
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striving does his best
Him can the angels redeem.' (tr. ew)]
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PART II

ANTI-SEMITISM IN KIERKEGAARD

- WITH CONSTANT REGARD TO

HIS INDIVIDUALISM

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CHAPTER 4

THE CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF

KIERKEGAARD'S ANTI-SEMITISM

Having looked at the situation for Jews, historically and politically, in Denmark at around Kierkegaard's time and considered Kierkegaard's personal background as it related, or not, to Jewish issues, the time has come to concentrate on the specific views and attitudes of Kierkegaard himself and to follow their development throughout his life. Although it was a short life, it was also unusually articulate and productive. It is therefore possible to follow any relevant theme via *Journals and Papers* as well as *Works*. Later, in Chapter 5 there will be a closer analysis of specific quotations relating to some of the prevalent issues.

So, this Chapter will outline the chronological order of ideas to do with 'Jews'

and 'Judaism', with less use of quotations, although sources will be given by way of notes. It is hoped that Kierkegaard's very negative attitudes will become clearly exposed to the reader, so that in the end there can be little argument supporting the view that Kierkegaard was not an anti-Semite. The evidence is voluminous as well as unequivocal. There are phases and themes on the way and briefly they look like this: archetypes, Biblical types, Goldschmidt and *The Corsair*, general issues of a social kind, Biblical comparisons, the battle with the Danish Church. The last group is related to Judaism because Kierkegaard read Judaism into what he thought Danish Christianity had become. He did this more and more until he thought every vicar in Denmark tainted.

When one compares Kierkegaard's remarks with other types of anti-Semitism, there is one class missing and that is the Political one. Kierkegaard was not a political writer, although he lived through enormous upheavals, as mentioned in earlier chapters. He did not see a world-wide threat, a Communist conspiracy or a take-over of the media by Jews. He often talked

about the smallness of Denmark both geographically and mentally and he saw Copenhagen as a provincial market town and not a metropolis, but the way he addresses the issues relating to Jews and Judaism is in many ways small and lacking in wingspan. When he argues for the separation of Church and State, it is not because he has a great vision of freedom for Christianity, but because he is irritated by the clergy's failure to imitate Christ. He sees materialism creeping in because vicars draw a salary and bishops dress in velvet and silk while preaching frugality, 'materialism' being, in his view, synonymous with 'Judaism'. He does not ponder the negatives of such separation. His protests have the timbre of impotent whining and while he abhors pragmatism, he seems himself a particularly impractical man, set free from material need by inherited wealth. It is a puzzle why he became so obsessed with 'the Jewish question'. One can suggest some reasons, like his friendship with the poet and professor, Poul Martin Møller,¹ his confrontations with Meir Goldschmidt, the attacks on him by the same via *The Corsair*, but they do not suffice to explain the sheer volume of remarks on the

subject. One does not read many pages from one such remark to the next and all through the *Journals* and the *Works*. There were other themes, but they tended to be of shorter duration.

The first entry about Jews can be found in the *Journals*, when Kierkegaard was only 21 years old and reading Schleiermacher. He was in his third year at University. He notes that the Jews's 'particularism' verged on "*Fetischismus*" whereas the Christian 'universalism' was so other that it must have been a provocation at the time of Christ:

It surprises me that none of the theologians, who have otherwise often enough remarked that the Christianity in the New Testament still had a strong taste of Judaism, that they could not also have treated the doctrine of unrestricted grace[*Naadevalg*] in the same way. Because when we note that with the Jews Particularism appeared in its very strongest form, so that it even bordered on *Fetischismus* (See Schleiermacher), then it was reasonable that the universal tendencies of Christianity would not please the Jews.²

Kierkegaard refers to the circumcision, saying that the Jew-Christians, i.e. those who converted at the time of Christ to Christianity

from Judaism, thought in the beginning that one had to continue with circumcision as a part of the religion. They needed, is Kierkegaard's argument, the tangible, material ritual. The spiritual was not enough. Baptism was, of course, a part of Christianity right from the start, but that too was in Kierkegaard's eyes an exterior process which could never effect, in itself, a spiritual change. One does not become a Christian simply by baptism, or any other sacrament. Kierkegaard's differentiation between 'Jew-Christians' and 'Heathen-Christians' was probably received via his University teaching, but the idea and also the position that 'Jews are materialistic' remained with him throughout his life.³ He clearly agreed with it.

At this early stage, there was still room for reflection of a more objective, detached kind. He is 22 years of age in 1835⁴ and he writes:

It seems to me that the question of Christianity's perfectibility can be answered simply by taking into account the fact that it adheres to Judaism. For since it itself only recognizes Judaism as relatively true and adheres to it, it can never itself be the absolute truth;

because it would never be able to recognize the Relative and certainly never itself adhere to it.⁵

The idea, that Christianity might not be perfect, quickly vanished, but not before another introspection came to the fore in the shape of the thought that Christianity might not be an end-station, but, 'like Judaism', a developmental stage leading on to another stage.

So far, the young man is only digesting university-led reading and there is no sign of personal encounters with individual Jews or Jewish practice. He is simply trying to map out a theological landscape. The tendency, though, is to seek out hierarchies.

Throughout his life, Kierkegaard considered Jews and Judaism thematically, that is, he had clumps of ideas which he pursued one by one. This could be partly explained by the fact that he wrote many of his comments on loose pieces of paper which went through several editorships (Barfod, Drachmann, etc.) including his own, before posthumous publication.⁶ For instance, *Pap.I, A49, p.22* was dated (unusually as most

were undated) 2nd May 1835, while *Pap.I*, A53, p.24 was dated 19th April 1835. The later volumes are more often marked "U.D. 1845", or whatever year has been guessed at, 'U.D.' meaning '*uden Datering*' [without a date]. With modern technology, one may in future be better able to date individual notes and achieve a more chronological ordering.⁷ However, the themes stretch over months and years, so the systematic thinking is undoubtedly there, and from the early years.

On 2nd May 1835, Kierkegaard wondered at the problem that in Judaism the fulfilment of the Law was rewarded with Bliss [*Salighed*], but the Law could never be fulfilled because it was impossible to do so, the demands too high, too many. The Divinity must have been aware of this:

I can well understand that it [the Law] might contain punishment for trespasses; but the Divinity had to realize (just like now the Christian) that it was impossible to fulfil it, and how then could it promise Bliss upon entering into a precondition, which it itself recognized as being impossible?⁸

The young man did not yet celebrate 'the Paradox'! Nor did he ponder the impossibilities

within Christianity. Although Christianity too adheres to and obeys The Ten Commandments, even tightening them so that e.g. "10. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife" is interpreted as not only an act but already the slightest thought, Kierkegaard thought of Christianity as rule-less and more humanly possible.⁹ The obsession, as he saw it, with rule in Judaism, signified materialism and worldliness, a lack of spirituality. It would seem Kierkegaard did not know the nature of some Jewish rules, which cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called materialistic. A Jew, for instance, man or woman, has to recite the *Shema*, a prayer, twice a day confirming the one-ness of the Divinity:

Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God,
the Lord is One.¹⁰

Archetypes

Now follows a longer period of preoccupation with the great archetypes: *Don Juan*, *Faust*, and the *Wandering (Eternal) Jew*. Later came *Don Quixote*, which idea was the longest lasting. The Jew steps out of the *Bible* as the abandoned, lonely and doomed figure. He is, says Kierke-

gaard, a symbol of Judaism's preparatory relationship with Christianity:

How beautiful is Judaism's preparatory relationship with Christianity as outlined in the legend of the Eternal Jew (See *Ein Volksbuchlein* [*Volksbüchlein*] p.27) where it is recounted as his life's end-point that he continuously accompanies those who come from distant parts in order to visit the Holy Land.¹¹

At the same time, continues Kierkegaard, he (the Eternal Jew) is as a story preceded in the New Testament, Matthew 21:17-22:

18. Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. [He=Jesus]

19. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said to it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.¹²

(See also Chapter 5, Note 19, p.9). In one story, the Jew is ordered to live, in misery, forever. In the other, the tree is ordered to lose life, miserably, forever. Both have failed to please, by withholding what was in their power to give, shade or nourishment.

All these types represent the ethical aspect of the human experience. There is in

fact one more type, flowing from the Bible, but not from the New Testament, like Ahasverus, the *Wandering, Eternal Jew*, and that is *Moses*. Moses leads his people to the *Promised Land*, but he himself cannot enter. Likewise, writes Kierkegaard, now 23 years old, Ahasverus. He too will lead people to Christ, to Christianity, but he himself must stay outside forever. So, the two types, Moses and the Wandering Jew, fuse into one, but before them and after, Kierkegaard himself becomes again and again a Moses figure, either denied access or leading his reader, or both. The *Promised Land* changes identity, but becomes more and more just 'the true Christianity'.

The story of the Jew who failed to allow Christ a seat in the shade on his laborious and painful way to Golgotha and who was then promptly condemned by the condemned man to wander the Earth, alone and despised, forever, evokes empathy, pity and a sense that one is oneself not securely different but could have failed in the same way. There is a curiosity on the part of Kierkegaard, expressed in the treatment of the issue, which does not preclude

sympathy. This is noteworthy because outside events in Kierkegaard's life would remove all such positive feelings for good. It was in any case a brief period. There is a youthful thrill in the ponderings on how badly things can go in life which both confirms the solidity of the parental protection and spurs on the young man in his work, so as to avoid a similar fate.

Biblical Types

The Crucifixion story carried the same attractions but here the spur was to suffer so as to triumph in the end. This gives a new angle to the abstract idea of the Jew; in fact, it brought a permanent shift from the Jew as one, to the Jew as part of a group, or as representative of a group. The angle is no longer folk tales but the New Testament. There will be less and less room for variation of the image of 'the Jew', all are alike.

Kierkegaard continually makes assumptions as to what the Jews believe, he uses these as premises to carry vast constructions meant to show the superiority of Christianity, forgetting

that if the premise is false, there may in reality be no argument, but total agreement. It has already been mentioned that Kierkegaard's claim that Jews are law-obsessed materialists was built on shaky foundations. He makes further claims by and by. Kierkegaard is now 24 and the year is 1837. He writes that the Jews erroneously await an *earthly* Messiah, in line with their expectation that money can heal and calm and their dreams of a happy marital match and being shoed into a certain civil servant career. Leave the money and the rest aside for a moment, and one has to ask what is meant by 'an earthly Messiah'?¹³ Did not the Christian Messiah 'come to Earth'? It was a common belief at the time that the only difference between a Jew and a Christian was that the Christian 'knew' that Messiah had arrived and all that was needed was to convince the Jew that this was so. However, 'Messiah' has in Judaism many definitions although one is that it (he/she) defies description. Like God, it (he/she) has no shape or form and it is futile to try to tell in advance. One will know when the time has come. This coming is awaited impatiently and every Jew hopes the arrival will happen in

his/her lifetime. Some Jews imagine it will be 'an epoch' of universal harmony and understanding. Other more Orthodox Jews believe they can hasten the arrival by carefully obeying all the Laws and carrying out as many God-pleasing deeds [*mitzvot*] as possible and maybe, if all Jews do so, Messiah will come. These ideas, mentioned in the *Jewish Prayer Book*, are not so tangible or 'earthly' as Kierkegaard envisages [esp. *adon olam* and New Year prayers].

A similar comparison is made two years on, in 1839, between the two 'Sermons on the Mount'. That is to say, the one Moses made coming down from Mt. Sinai and the one made by Christ in the mountains. Kierkegaard emphasizes the human scale of Christ's approach. He sat at the foot of the mountain, whereas Moses came down from the summit, the Law had already been fulfilled, because Christ was the fulfilment. This fulfilment of the Law had been made possible on Earth.¹⁴ Again, although it is the Jews Kierkegaard calls earth-bound and materialistic, it is the Christ who is 'down to Earth' and approachable, in his view.

There are few anti-Jewish remarks in Kierkegaard's writings in connection with the 'Crucifixion'. That is not what drives his later campaign against the Jews, and it does take the form of a campaign in his last *Journals*, as will appear in the text below. He does remark, aged 26 in 1839, that "he who spared Abraham's first and only son, did not spare his own."¹⁵ (Isaac was, of course, neither first, nor only.) However, this is hardly anti-Semitism although it serves to illustrate what Kierkegaard sees as God's preference: 'He sacrificed his only son for us, the Christians'. God's involvement was the greatest possible, Abraham and Isaac were only a test-run. Jews say: 'The Christians have a god who would kill his own son. We do not believe God would kill his own son', but this is a dangerous argument as Jews do not believe God had a son and on the whole find the idea of the Trinity difficult to grasp and basically unacceptable.¹⁶ Most of the Crucifixion material comes in 1847, when Kierkegaard was writing against Adler (a priest who believed he had had revelations and was later defrocked when he was unable to describe them). This is seven

years hence.

Søren Kierkegaard completed his final exams in Theology in 1840 with a 'laude' (high mark) and it is possible to read his questions in the volume containing his *Letters and Documents*.¹⁷ They testify to the fact that some of Kierkegaard's ideas came straight from the University teaching, like the concept of 'Jew-Christians' and 'Heathen-Christians' (See Chapter 5). This was also the year in which Kierkegaard became engaged to Regine Olsen and the first issue of the magazine, *The Corsair*, came out, although it was not until 1845 that the *Corsair Affair* began. Kierkegaard writes romantically about the Jewish festival of Succot, in Danish 'festival of the halls of foliage [*Løvsalsfest*]', to his fiancée and asks her to imagine him sitting in this wonderful space with the aroma of the fresh, leafy branches surrounding him. The abundant material in the *Journals* preceding the exam thins out, naturally, during the engagement.

This period, sadly, soon comes to an end with the dissolution of the engagement and

Kierkegaard's almost flight to Berlin from whence he then ironizes to his friends at home via the postal system. He is stirred by the phenomenon of a converted Jew, Professor Karl W. Werder,¹⁸ and ponders on the idea that such people have extra vigour and wrote about ten years later, in 1850, aged 37, in his *Journal*:

I have myself, in older journals, shown this, that Good certainly gives strength, but Eternity's delicate [kind], which is also why the good [person], the innocent [one] suffers so profoundly. Evil (simply through despair) gives desperate lust for life, and gives strength (while the good [person] is longing to leave life). I have shown why precisely baptized Jews are good representatives for that kind of energy, because more often than not, they have no religion, have despairingly understood that only this life has been allotted them. That gives impetus.¹⁹

Kierkegaard is in fact saying that baptism left Jews with no religion and no salvation. It has already been shown that he did not believe that one became a Christian by being baptized. In Chapters 1 and 2, it was shown that Jews did go and get baptized for the sake of their career. Take for instance Henrik Hertz, the poet and playwright, who got himself baptized prior to lifting his anonymity and who almost certainly

withdrew into Judaism in the home, having married a Jewish woman. A certain scepticism was probably justified in the Christian population, but this piece, above, does sound like racial hostility rationalized and it is built on a misconception, as will be demonstrated later in this Chapter. Usually, Jews remained the stereotypical pawn-brokers gleefully watching the mighty falling.²⁰ (See also Chapter 2). It is a period (1840s) of some ambivalence in relation to the Jewish issue, some notes are highly critical, others are almost defensive. In 1843, Kierkegaard makes the observation that 'the Categories' are so different in the Old and the New Testament. (Jews, of course, do not operate with these terms. For them there is no Old Testament, only the Bible/Torah). In the Old Testament, he comments, it is all about becoming really comfortable in this world, in the temporal sphere, while in the New Testament, the focus is on the Eternal. This makes it very difficult for the priest giving a sermon.²¹ Kierkegaard was at that point himself beginning to give sermons. He gives his *Demis Sermon* [*Demis Prædiken* (trial sermon upon completed studies)]

in Trinity Church [*Trinitatis Kirke*] on 24th February 1844 on the subject of 'the Jew-Christians', about how the Faith is 'an outrage to the Jews and a madness to the Greeks'.²² Again, he gets a 'laude'. At the same time, he makes a note in defence of the Jews:

It really is strange that Spinoza keeps using the objection to the miracle, to the revelation, that it was a peculiarity with the Jews, leading something immediate back to God, jumping over the middle-causes, accurately as if it was something peculiar to the Jews and not something peculiar in all religiosity.²³

So far, this Chapter has followed Kierkegaard through his University years and into his first publications, preparation for priesthood, engagement, breaking the engagement, Berlin and back. His views on Jews and Judaism have moved from the literary to the Biblical. They will now move to the personal, individual level, but by removing individuality. The catalyst is Meir Goldschmidt, the handsome, flamboyant editor of several magazines, one of which was *The Corsair*. (See Chapter 2 for details.) The pattern is the same for the person as for the idea and the people: romantic curiosity, ambivalence, and all end in total hostility.

Goldschmidt and The Corsair

Kierkegaard is writing *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* and he decides to make his pseudonym, Johannes Climacus,

sort of quite a simple person as now for instance myself; I, Johannes Climacus born and bred in Copenhagen, medium built, black hair and brown eyes, now thirty years old.²⁴

In 1845, Kierkegaard was 32 and Goldschmidt was 26. 30 was very nearly the average between the two. It is very likely Goldschmidt's brown eyes and black hair. None of Kierkegaard's friends looked that exotic. Furthermore, Climacus turned out to be a non-believer and later Anti-Climacus became the near perfect believer. Another clue is that he is said 'to drown everything in humour.'²⁵ Kierkegaard specifies it in 1849, while using the Anti-Climacus name:

Joh. Climacus has a considerable amount in common with Anti-Climacus; but the difference is that as Joh. Climacus puts himself so low that he even pronounces himself to be not a Christian, so one seemed to be able to feel from Anti-Climacus that he thinks himself to be a Christian to an exceptional degree.

...

I determined myself higher than Joh. Climacus, lower than Anti-Climacus.²⁶

In 1846, the Goldschmidt/*Corsair* comments in the *Journal* begin, never to subside again. Kierkegaard is deeply hurt right from the start. He had thought he would be able to take it, but when the satire concentrated on his physique rather than his mind, he found himself more vulnerable than expected. He tries to keep himself above it all, writing:

'Boys will be judging you' says one of the old prophets and proclaims it the hardest punishment of the disobedient Israel. That fits the times we live in - boys write in the newspapers etc. Here also applies what Socrates talks about in Plato's *Republic*, that in the end the parents are frightened of the children and in fear of themselves having to make fun and games - such as the children want.²⁷

In other words, *The Corsair* is child's play, and what has the world come to if children are running the country? The wealth of instalments about Goldschmidt and *The Corsair* is almost 50% of the entire body of Jew-related writings. To begin with, as above, there is a sense that justice will prevail and the victim of satire will be restored to dignity, then the rage grows as it realizes its impotence and finally, there is a sense of defeat and abandonment. No one rode to his defence, not even Heiberg or Mynster. However, and this is the puzzle,

Kierkegaard cannot forget that the editor of *The Corsair* is a Jew. He cannot address Goldschmidt as another individual. He feels humiliated by a whole race. Goldschmidt is in his eyes a foreigner, a usurper. He should not attract attention by, for instance, smart attire. Kierkegaard cannot imagine how others can treat Goldschmidt, or Levin, for that matter, as an equal. It is obvious to him that these people with 'black hair and brown eyes' are all of one kind. They are 'other'.

Perhaps this is precisely where Kierkegaard's anger becomes impotent because it does not address itself to its cause. It does not realize that Goldschmidt's race is of no importance here. It is about Goldschmidt's actions, not his ancestry. Goldschmidt is not an idiot (if he is) because he is a Jew, but because he acts despicably (if he does). That is the argument. Kierkegaard will get no else one on his side until he realizes that.

A few examples may be in order here.

Around 1846, he remarked:

The Corsair speaks a foreign language, a modernized jargon, which it is impossible for anyone Danish, and any respectable Jew, to understand. Everything has been

turned upside down, as I also expressed it, in the dialectics of the magazine, and in the way in which it again expresses itself. Because *The Corsair* is, of course, a Jew-uprising against the Christians.²⁸

There is here a differentiation between 'bad Jews' and 'good Jews'. Only, it cannot be said so simply, so the reference to 'respectable Jews' automatically suggests 'non-respectable Jews', i.e. people like Meïr Goldschmidt. It resembles Martensen's 'Orthodox Jews', who are the 'good Jews' (See Chapter 2). The last two lines are a package that can be unwrapped. The striking bit is the 'of course' which hints that 'we all agree on this'. What 'we' agree on is that '*The Corsair* is a Jew-uprising against the Christians'. The evidence for this statement is one alleged remark by Goldschmidt in *The Corsair* to his fellow Jews, to the effect that they must compel the Danes to respect them. Whatever one thinks about that, it cannot be called 'an uprising', or 'a call to rise up' and it is hardly 'against the Christians' as 1) there is no reference to 'Christians', 2) Danes are hardly synonymous with Christians, as Kierkegaard elsewhere is at pains to point out. Kierkegaard is filling page after page about this 'insult to right-thinking Danes'.

Having himself risen up to challenge *The Corsair* as a single individual and got more flak than anticipated. Kierkegaard then wonders why 'his own', i.e. Heiberg and Mynster, do not go into action to defend Danish culture and himself against this 'mob' of Heathens or worse, Jews! He writes in 1849:

In short, I am a phenomenon, and under conditions as fatal as possible: being a phenomenon in such a sordid little joint [*Kneipe*] as Denmark. The law for the persecution I suffer is quite simple: it happens by mob, while the posher people stay silent, out of sheer envy.²⁹

The sense of abandonment is palpable. He tries to guess why no one speaks up in his defence and comes up with the explanation that his fame has kindled 'envy' in 'posher people'. In the very next instalment, he lapses into pathos:

What I am slightly short of is physical strength, because spiritually I feel exceedingly and constantly on top of everything.³⁰

It is sad and lonely feelings and one has some empathy. This is not an unprovoked man; but still, is it really Jews rising up against Christians? No, it is not!

In a time of increasing equality, legally

and practically, for the Jews it must have been difficult to keep a steady self-image. How much of a victim can one claim to be? When Goldschmidt in 1845 published his novel *A Jew*, he used a *nom de plume* but everyone knew he was the author. One may speculate as to his real motivation. Did he write it to seek sympathy for all Jews in Denmark? Did he want to show that one thing is Law, another reality on the ground? Or did he just want people to pity him? It certainly is sentimental. Kierkegaard thought the novel was an apology for *The Corsair*: 'I am the editor, that makes me okay, doesn't it?'. Kierkegaard thought he was trying and succeeding in saying, 'I am a Jew, I have suffered. Surely, you cannot hurt him who has already been hurt so much'. Kierkegaard sums it up, over and over, like this:

Furthermore, he discovers that there is something like destiny over him, that it is so far from [the truth] that during the course of the years, he is slipping more and more away from his 6 years behind the rascal; that on the contrary, it is as if retribution is coming closer and closer, without him daring to rely on the *Ak weih mir, ak weih mir* [Oh, I am hurting, I am hurting] which once helped him (I mean his compassion-extorting novel *A Jew*)

to help him now.³¹

Goldschmidt had got a licence, thought Kierkegaard. He had made himself immune against any criticism. Anyone writing a harsh line would be thought unkind. It would not work on Kierkegaard, as they both knew. 'The poor Jew'-formula would not work on Kierkegaard. This kind of minority game, either way, is not necessarily about anti-Semitism or racism, and is not here counted as such. Kierkegaard could be right. Perhaps it was not meant as a direct antidote to *The Corsair*, but the tone and style of the book certainly was 'milking it'. However, when Kierkegaard writes that Goldschmidt's attacking him, ridiculing him, was sheer business; it brought in the money and as a Jew, money was all Goldschmidt could understand, then the label anti-Semitism does stick. With that Kierkegaard moves from the individual to the group, the species, and says that Jews only care about money, Goldschmidt is a Jew, ergo: Goldschmidt only cares about money. That Goldschmidt-only-cares-about-money may be true or false, but that Goldschmidt-only-cares-about-money-because-he-is-a-Jew is racism.³²

Kierkegaard saw Goldschmidt at first as an exotic foreigner, linking up with his ideas about the doomed Wandering Jew, someone in need of paternal advice. Then came the *Corsair débâcle*, when Kierkegaard initially refused to believe Goldschmidt involved, then grew enraged that he, a full-blooded Dane, was being mocked in public by a Jew. After that followed a period of calming-down. Then Goldschmidt returned from abroad where he had spent some years, having sold *The Corsair*, which subsequently quickly folded.³³ Upon his return, Goldschmidt started his third magazine, this time aiming for a cultured, educated readership. It was called *Nord og Syd* [North and South], perhaps referring to his own internal divisions. The title, incidentally, became itself an object of hilarity and a theatre play referred to it as *East and West*, which to a Dane has comical connotations to do with 'confusion', 'lostness'. Kierkegaard was again enraged as he saw the magazine as an attempt on the part of Goldschmidt to salvage his reputation and that should not be allowed. He did not want to see Goldschmidt reinstated while he himself was still suffering the repercussions of *The Corsair*

and could not walk in the streets of Copenhagen without being sniggered at. No, he wanted him to pay penitence:

In truth, in order for Goldschmidt to become considered a decent person again, one would have to demand a public penitence, and of a special kind, one which would be printed every eight days throughout a year in a magazine. One could also with some justification demand that he make an attempt to repay the blood-money he has earned, that he give it beneficent purpose - Judas himself was that honest, he gave the money back.³⁴

One wonders whether Kierkegaard would have used the reference to Judas, had the perpetrator not been Jewish. With all the previous remarks about Jewish greed for money and purchasable goods, it is hard not to view this quotation as the natural next step for someone who wanted to get at Jews in general and this one in particular. Wanting to see Goldschmidt as a penitent and preferably humiliated in public, it was a shock for Kierkegaard instead to find him praised by the Bishop in public and alongside himself. This was in 1851. Mynster had written a booklet of about 50 pages entitled, *Yderligere Bidrag til Forhandlingerne om de kirkelige Forhold i Danmark* [Further Contributions to the Negotiations about the Clerical Conditions in

Denmark] and given Kierkegaard a copy. He found himself quoted a couple of times in it, but preceded by a compliment to Goldschmidt. While Kierkegaard was called "the intelligent author", Goldschmidt was referred to as "one of our most talented authors" but without mentioning his name, although enough clues were left in to identify him by, if one had the inside knowledge.³⁵ Not only had Mynster failed to protect Goldschmidt's victim, Søren Kierkegaard, but now he was honouring Goldschmidt and almost in the same breath as Kierkegaard. This was the ultimate betrayal. With that, all hope of just intervention had vanished and Goldschmidt was allowed to flourish regard-less of what he had done in the recent past. It was a slight that grew and grew in Kierkegaard's mind. Goldschmidt became the undeserving victor, confirming a feeling already voiced many times but now repeated with bitter satisfaction:

It is almost, humanly speaking, as if God were too cruel to the agnostic by letting everything succeed for him in this way.³⁶

'Those who suffer on Earth shall be rewarded in the hereafter and vice versa.' This thought is in fact matched in Jewish theology. David Kraemer, Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics,

writes:

Jews of this period [late 2nd Century CE] believed that suffering effects atonement..., so a death which involves greater suffering (after death) would effect atonement more completely..., we may now generalize: death, which causes pain, consequently effects atonement. The deceased, who feels after death, knows after, and is judged after death, will enjoy the benefits of this atonement, not in this world but in the World to Come.³⁷

and again later:

Ultimately, it is all about the same thing: suffering brings atonement, atonement brings life. Suffering in this world brings life in this world. Suffering in death brings life in the World to Come.³⁸

Kierkegaard constantly argues that suffering is purification and part of Christianity. It is a preparation for the afterlife. He says that Jews hope for rewards in this life because for them there is no afterlife. This is a clear misunderstanding of Judaism, as Kraemer shows in his book about Jewish death-rituals and -beliefs. There is in fact little difference between Jewish and Christian hopes for an eternal life. The important thing to notice is that Kierkegaard is not careful with his premises. He builds entire constructions on top

of what is nothing but folklore and prejudice. His real knowledge about Judaism, despite his exam in Theology and Hebrew Studies, was poor. When he takes comfort in the thought that the very success of Goldschmidt in the world is a sign that he is condemned, eventually he will die and then meet with his just desert, then he deludes himself, from a theological perspective. Kierkegaard imagines that Goldschmidt, being a Jew, is only interested in the glory of the here and now. In fact, according to Jewish thought both Goldschmidt and Kierkegaard should be concerned about the judgement after death and prepare for it, in this life. As Goldschmidt's memoirs show, he was deeply concerned and built a whole system of his own around 'the Nemesis Principle', the idea that there are natural balances in life of punishment and reward. His starting point was Egyptian mythology.³⁹

Social Issues

It is often difficult to separate off the social accusations against Jews in Kierkegaard because they are mostly embedded in theological arguments, but there are some that stand alone.

Those that verge on the Biblical are to do with the Family, sacraments, materialism, etc. They later become part of his ammunition against the Danish Church which he accuses of having become Jewish. A treatment of this issue will follow after this section.

Martensen's anti-Semitism (See Chapter 2) was in a sense more modern than Kierkegaard's. He brings up charges to do with cosmopolitanism and political take-over. Kierkegaard, realistically, did not see a threat to the country, only to himself. When he perceived a spreading 'Judaism' within the Church, he did not blame Jews, but blamed Grundtvig.

Kierkegaard left University in 1841 and in 1845 the *Corsair Affair* began. This period and its repercussions have been dealt with above. The social 'observations' about Jews take their beginning after that, in 1847. Thinking back on the *Affair* in 1849, he writes:

I did not know whether to laugh or cry when he [Goldschmidt], tears in his eyes (as he was, what is usually the case with that sort of people, easily moved to tears), said...⁴⁰

This is the Mediterranean theme. Kierkegaard sees 'these people' as volatile, highly strung and Goldschmidt has tears in his eyes because he is a Jew and easily upset. 'Such people', according to Kierkegaard, are also prone to involuntary switches in vocal pitch, due to strong emotion.⁴¹ Is he thinking of Italian opera, one wonders. But no, he points out that this especially applies to Jews. Could this be true? Kierkegaard has a right to state the truth. Still, this is not a matter of common knowledge and has not been mentioned in many places. This writer has not made the same observation despite knowing more Jews than did Kierkegaard. It is a strange remark to make about any group, except young boys of any culture.

Another theme is 'love of abstraction' caused by 'an abstract god'. This leads to love of money, love of group:

This is also why, what our age shows and what already Poul Møller was so alert to, without, however, explaining it - that Jews especially, are suited as publicists. The Jew is in general without imagination, or humour [*gemütløs*], but abstract intelligence, he does have - and the number is his

element.⁴²

The word 'publicist' [*Publicist*] can best be understood as 'journalist', a word Kierkegaard does in fact use from time to time. So, Kierkegaard did not like journalists, he also did not like politicians or politics:

...that I religiously conduct myself entirely correctly...what these good politicians should certainly come to verify, who precisely through their politics or through not understanding anything other than how a case must be served politically, are prevented from seeing according to which measurement, work is done on my part...⁴³

This citation is not about Jews. There were not many Jews in government in Denmark in those days, but it is an illustration of one more profession being denigrated by Kierkegaard, as well as proof that Kierkegaard was no political writer and would not want to be. Many commentators argue that he was.⁴⁴

The group of social statements about Jews is undeniably small; as he says himself, his angle was not political but religious. It is for this reason that one finds the basically social issues deep inside religious reflections. Because they are without basis in Christian or Jewish theology in most cases, they cannot be

called religious because as prejudice built on misconceptions, they properly belong in this section, rather than the next. Still, as the language and references are Biblical, they must be in a class of their own. As a sub-section of Social Issues, they will be called 'Couched Social Issues'.

Couched Social Issues

These issues are family, marriage, single status, baptism, circumcision. They too occur from 1847 and forwards until the end in 1855. They get taken up and honed from time to time but they do not change essentially. Often they have their beginnings in outright postulations about Jews, but with time it is no longer necessary to repeat that. The theme itself is the trigger and it is understood that the contrast, for instance, is Judaism. Kierkegaard will start off saying that Jewish families feel blessed if they have many children - and one has to keep in mind the fact that Kierkegaard's parents had 7 children, Kierkegaard being the youngest. Aged 26, he remarks:

Our age is more and more losing the teleological factor which is part of a life-view, and among the cultured classes one would probably find many who would consider a marriage without children the highest [point] - one might in this connection contrarily think of the Jews who almost totally relinquished their own existence, only to seek it in someone else's.⁴⁵

He adds that such marriages are probably too selfish to give up anything for another and there is no higher idea to it at all. So: if one has no children, it is probably because one is too selfish and if one has many children (like the Jews), or any children, it is because one seeks immortality via another. It is not easy to see what would be the correct way! Aged 41, he writes about Grundtvig's followers:

Grundtvigeans are quite strict: Jews. I undertake to confirm that they believe Jewishly in marriage to such a degree that they not only, as Christianity teaches, regard it as permissible (in contradiction to celibacy), ... no, they believe that one cannot be a true Christian without being married, i.e. that a flock of children and numerous offspring are God's blessing, the sign of being pleasing to God: quite Jewish.⁴⁶

There are many jibes like that, quite a few of which refer to the uncontrollable lust of Jews, who must have their pleasure in this world. Later, as here, Christians are accused of the same, but their behaviour is still called

'Jewish' and the word 'Jewish' is clearly derogatory. Calling someone 'Jewish' will suggest that he can neither control his lust, nor his voice. Celibacy is the only way to God. Continuing the above piece, Kierkegaard goes on to say what baptism means to the same people:

Henceforth, instead of:
circumcision, they have (equally an
objective): baptism, which they in-
voke, completely as the Jews
circumcision.⁴⁷

Baptism has become a rite of passage and not a dedication of oneself to God. It takes place while the child is too young to protest, like the circumcision. Both sacraments signify membership of a chosen people, says Kierkegaard. With all these ideas about the nature of Jews, one cannot wonder why Kierkegaard kept a distance, but a bit of exposure to real-life Jews might have had a positive influence.

The fixation on Judaism reaches a peak in 1854-5, Kierkegaard's last year of life. This is also when the Danish Church became in his eyes: Jewish. The two faiths had in his eyes become indistinguishable, equally materialistic, etc.

The Church Battle

When Bishop Mynster died in 1854 and Regine left the country early in 1855, Kierkegaard felt free to speak openly, as himself, in public, and the *Moment* started coming out. 'Basically', he wrote, 'the Danish Church had become Jewish, occupied with earthly things, like Judaism'. A string of pamphlets explained the rot. An example could be *The Moment* 7. It is about the definition of a Christian. Kierkegaard depicts a businessman whose motto is that, 'Everyone is a thief in his own profession'. One has to be a thief, because everyone else is:

"A businessman", he says, "ought, even though he has no religion, never to let it show, because that could easily become damaging and bring his honesty into doubt and a businessman should, if possible, have the country's prevailing religion". With regard to the latter, he explains it thus; the Jews were always known to be cheating more than the Christians, but this is far from being the case. He insists that the Christians cheat just as well as the Jews, but what is damaging to the Jews, is not having the country's prevailing religion.⁴⁸

By the same token, no class of society gets away with more cheating than the priests, precisely because they have the right religion and plenty

of it. The businessman wishes he could become ordained, so that he could cheat even more, "it would pay brilliantly". This is a farce and the serious point is the corruption of priests, but one detects a thread of genuine opinion. At best, this is a daring joke. At worst, a nasty racist stab. However, in No.6, he remarked that,

the crumbs of religiosity to be found in this country are at most Judaism.⁴⁹

Well, not very funny, if one is a Jew! An article entitled *Salt* was published on 30th March 1855 in the newspaper *Fædrelandet* [The Fatherland] and this too is preoccupied with the idea that Danish Christians have become Jews. He calls the salaries of the priests 'blood money' and compares them with Judas 'who after all was a Jew'. The whole piece is deeply offensive and could not have been published today.

The *coup de grâce* is delivered in *The Moment 2*:

To that extent the New Testament is therefore no more the truth: The road the widest, the gate the broadest, and we are all Christian. Yes, I dare go one step further -

it fires me up, because it is a eulogy over the human race [Slægten] - I dare insist that the average of the Jews living amongst us, are, to a certain degree, Christian like the rest of us: to that extent, we are all Christian, to the extent, the New Testament is no longer the truth.⁵⁰

Not only have Christians become Jews, but Jews have become Christian and all is a blur. Nothing could offend a Jew more and he or she would heartily agree: the New Testament is no truth for them either.

Chapter 4

NOTES

All translations have been done by ew, although there are references to the American Hong translations, where these exist.

1. Pattison, G., *Kierkegaard, Religion and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Culture*(2002), Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge,U.K., pp.244. 'Cosmopolitan Faces', pp.72-95, with regard to the Wandering Jew and Poul Martin Møller.
2. (eds.)Heiberg,P.A., Kuhr,V. & Torsting,E., *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer* (1909-38), Gyldendalske Boghandel, Cph., DK. [= *Pap.* hereafter], Vols.I-XI. *Pap.I,A4*, p.2, 8th July 1834 [Hong 410]. [tr.ew & Hong].

[Hong]=(eds.&trs.) Hong, H.& E., *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers* [JP] (1978),Indiana Univ.Press,Bloomington, U.S.&Ldn.,U.K., Vols.1-7. [Selection]. "Schleiermacher *Der christliche Glaube* (1830,Berlin), I, p.52". Vol.1, p.167.
3. In Danish *Hedninge*, which is closer to 'Heathens' than the more usual translation of 'Pagans', as in Hong, and others. A 'Heathen' has no faith but a 'Pagan' believes in Nature as god and so has a faith. In modern times, Paganism has seen a revival and therefore, it could be confusing to use that word to denote an absence of belief.
4. Strictly speaking, SK [Søren Kierkegaard] turned 22 on 5/5 1835.
5. *Pap.I,A46*, p.21, 3rd Feb. 1835 [Hong 414].
6. *Pap.I*, Introduction.

7. See, for instance, (eds.) Cappelørn, N.J.,
et al., *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter*
[Writings] currently being published
(1997-), Gads Forlag, Cph., DK. Vols.
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8. *Pap.I*, A49, p.22, 2nd May 1835 [Hong 2208].
9. *Ibid.*
10. (ed.&tr.) Singer, S., *The Authorized Daily
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2210].
12. *Pap.I*, C65, p.222, 28th March 1835 [Hong
5087]. New Testament, Matt.21:17-22.
13. *Pap.II*, A150, p.81, 31st August 1837 [Hong
857].
14. *Pap.II*, A473, p.182, 7th July (1839)
[Hong 297].
15. *Pap.II*, A569, p.209, 13th Sept. (1839)
[Hong 298].
16. Orthodox rabbi speaking in Oxford.
17. (ed.) Thulstrup, N., *Breve og Aktstykker
Vedrørende Søren Kierkegaard* [Letters
and Documents Concerning SK] (1953-4),
Munksgaard, Cph., DK. Vols. I-II, 344pp.
+ 137pp. Document (Theologian Exam
Protocol XII, pp.9-12.

(eds&trs.) Hong, H. & E., *Kierkegaard's
Writings* = [KW], (1978-2000), Prince-
ton Univ. Press, Princeton, U.S.,
Vols. I-XXVI. KWXXV: (tr.) Rosenmeier,
H., *Kierkegaard : Letters and Documents*
(1978).
18. Werder: See Chapter 2, p.73, Note 39.
19. *Pap.X,2*, A404, p.287 (1850) [Hong 4028].
20. *Pap.III*, A105, p.49, U.D.(1841) [Hong 5495].

21. *Pap.IV*, A143, p.54, U.D.(1843) [Hong 1507]
22. *Pap.IV*, C1, p.356, U.D. (1844) [Hong 3916].
23. *Pap.IV*, A190, p.70 (1844) [Hong 1333].
24. *Pap.VI*, B40:26 (1845) [Not in Hong]. (See also *Pap.X,1*, A151).
25. *Pap.X,1*, A530, pp.338-9 (1849) [Hong 6439].
26. *Pap.X,1*, A517, p.332 (1849) [Hong 6433].
27. *Pap.VII*, 1, A58, p.25 (1846) [Hong 1162].
(Plato's *Republic*, VIII, 563a).
28. *Pap.VII,1*, B13, p.181 (1846) [Not in Hong].
29. *Pap.X,1*, A224, p.152 (1849) [Not in Hong].
30. *Pap.X,1*, A225, p.152 (1849) [Not in Hong].
31. *Pap.XI,3*, B9, p.17 (1854-5) [Not in Hong].
"His 6 years" = as editor of *The Corsair* (1840-6). "The Rascal" = a strawman.
32. *Pap.VII,1*, B8, pp.169-70 (1845) [Not in Hong].
Pap.VII,1, B13, p.181 (1846) [Not in Hong].
Pap.IX, A97, p.51 (1848) [Not in Hong].
33. In 1848, Goldschmidt returned to Denmark and created the new journal *Nord og Syd* [North and South], a monthly, starting in January. This would have rekindled the talk about *Corsaren* [The Corsair], and P.L.Møller. The *Affair* took place in 1845-6. Goldschmidt left Denmark in October 1846, having sold *The Corsair*.
34. *Pap.X,1*, A311, p.207 (1849) [Not in Hong].
35. Garff, J., *SAK* (2001), Gads Forlag, Cph., DK, 703pp. P.583.
36. *Pap.X,1*, A426, pp.273-4 [Hong 843].
37. Kraemer, D., *The Meaning of Death in Rabbinic Judaism*, (2000), Routledge, Ldn., U.K., pp.159. P.40.
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39. Goldschmidt, M.A., *Livserindringer og Resultater* [Memoirs and Results], (1877... 1965), Vols.I-II, with Foreword and Notes by Borup, M., Rosenkilde og Bagger, Cph.,DK. Vol.II, p.159 ff.
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41. See Chapter 3, p.155.
42. *Pap.XI,2*, A26, p.28 (1854) [Hong 2985].
43. *Pap.XI,2*, A413, pp.402-6 (9th June 1855) [Not in Hong]. See also Chapter2.
44. Kirmmse,B., *Søren Kierkegaard's Golden Age Denmark* (1990) Indiana Univ. Press, Indianapolis, U.S.A., pp.485. P.305: "the political criticism can be seen in SK's emphasis upon individualism contra the group, and in his continuing religious application of such liberal and democratic political catch-words as 'universality', 'equality', and 'unity'." (See also Kirmmse pp.359 and 377.)
45. *Pap.II*, A374, p.149 (25th February 1839) [Hong 2579].
46. *Pap.XI,1*, A149, pp.113-4 (1854) [Hong 6876].
47. *Ibid.*
48. (eds.) Heiberg, J.L. & Drachmann, A.B., *Søren Kierkegaards Samlede Værker* [SK's Collected Works] (1920-38) Bianco Luno (now Gyldendal) Cph.,DK., Vols.I-XV [=SV]. SVXIV, *Øieblikket* 7 [The Moment 7], p.254. KWXXIII, p.231.
49. *Ibid.*, p.235. KW p.213.
50. *Ibid.*, p.129. KW p.115.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF QUOTATIONS:

I THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

In the preceding chapter, an overview was given of the lineal development of Kierkegaard's concept of 'Jews' and 'Judaism'. Keeping that in mind, this Chapter will provide and analyze specific quotations, mainly from Kierkegaard's Journals. It will focus on: 'The Biblical Evidence', while Chapter 6 will treat 'The Social Evidence'. The latter is again divided into two sections: *Goldschmidt and The Corsair* and *General Issues*. Many Biblical observations border on the Social and vice versa, but when in doubt, they have been counted as Biblical. This has made Chapter 5 more voluminous than Chapter 6. There has been no shortage of evidence in any group and a selection had to be made. Philosophically, the excerpts are unsophisticated, often built on presumed shared first principles, or 'premises', and often unfounded entirely. As Goldhagen (1996) so

aptly remarks:

All antisemitism is fundamentally 'abstract' in the sense of not being derived from actual qualities of Jews, yet simultaneously is real and concrete in its effects.¹

Kierkegaard, in his writings, actions and omissions, illustrates that, as G.A. Cohen (2000) remarked, it is not enough that a state has just laws if it has no ethos of justice. Much harm can be done within the law. A child who alone of all her school class is not invited to a party, has no recourse to the law, yet the harm inflicted is profound. Kierkegaard's transgressions were fully legal, but would not today pass as ethical.

This Chapter sets out to be a kind of ethical trial of a thinker made famous for his emphasis on 'the single individual' and the responsibility of that single individual. Is Kierkegaard guilty of incoherence and lack of love for his neighbour? Some examples may seem repetitious of Chapter 4, but their treatment is more analytical.

The Biblical Evidence

We have to love our neighbour, writes Kierkegaard in his *Works of Love*.² And who is then this neighbour?

The neighbor is every person, since on the basis of dissimilarity he is not your neighbor, nor on the basis of similarity to you in your dissimilarity from other people. He is your neighbor on the basis of equality with you before God, but unconditionally every person has this equality and has it unconditionally.³

There is no ambiguity in this statement. Kierkegaard elaborates that it is easy to love the beloved, for in a sense that is loving oneself. It is also easy to love one's own family, one's own group, but if you are rich, young, beautiful etc., it is not so easy to love those who are not. Nevertheless, it is one's duty to love the person who is other. It may sound a contradiction in terms to have a duty to love, says Kierkegaard, and unconditionally at that. How can one love the unlovable? One can educate one's heart, in the knowledge that all human beings are God's creatures.

This is in a sense Kierkegaard's 'stall'. This is the standard by which he judges and wishes to be judged. It is the intention here to return to the passage at the end of the Chapter and to ask: How does Kierkegaard himself measure up? However, it is this precise text which also carries a negative comparison with Judaism, saying that exclusivity is not part of the Christian agenda:

It is not demanded of the Christian, of course, that he in blind and ignorant fervour should take it to such an extreme that he could no longer bear to read a poet - as little as it is demanded of the Christian that he must not eat with others ordinary food, or that he must live apart from other people in the enclosure of exclusivity.⁴

Surely, this refers to Jewish Law, kosher rules about food and the eruv.⁵ This is Judaism compared unfavourably with Christianity. It might be acceptable to say 'Christianity does not demand that the individual separate himself off'. If this is presumed to be the case. Comparing one religion with another is hardly wrong. To say: 'As a Christian, I must love every person, rich or poor, wise or stupid. However, Religion X does not think so, which is why I prefer my own religion' seems permissible.

If it is presumed that Religion X teaches in this way. The problem arises when a clever parallelogram assumes that the other is "blind and ignorant" in his "fervour", that he "must not eat with others ordinary food", and that he "must live apart from other people". By stating that certain things are not demanded of Christians, the writer implies that these things are demanded of others who are not Christians. Why else state it? No one could sue for libel here. Nothing is said that is not true. It is like a contemporary journalist writing: 'This man, who has not yet been charged with any crime, took the train to Paris yesterday.' On the face of it 'a man took the train to Paris yesterday'. What of it? Ah! -: 'He has not yet been charged with any crime'! By stating an absence, the writer draws the attention to the possibility of its opposite, its presence. He may even play on half accepted superstitions, such as: 'Jews do not eat with others'. 'Jews do not eat ordinary food', i.e. 'ordinary' meaning 'the kind of food that we eat', and so on.

'Fervour' is here linked with 'blind

ignorance', yet 'fervour' meaning 'passion' is hardly a feeling unknown to the writer. Neither is 'blind obedience'. The liturgical affirmation, used by Christians and Jews alike, could not be more passionate:

You shall love the Lord your
God...with all your heart and all
your might.⁶

About obedience, Kierkegaard writes:

Thus the Christian serves in total
obedience only one master...This
life is the Song of Praise; because
a human being can only praise God
through obedience, preferably total
obedience.⁷

But is 'total obedience' not blind? Certainly, it does not argue. It must be extreme to be total because there is no further point, it is the outermost station.

The broken logic, the presumption of shared premises, the acceptance of shaky first premises lie at the heart of many of Kierkegaard's remarks, statements, accusations relating to Jews and Judaism. They tend to occur in groups and clusters and a selection of these can be headed: *University, The Eternal/Wandering Jew, Old vs. New Testament, Judaism vs. Christianity, The Hebrew Language, Islam & Catholicism*. After

a treatment of these, there will be a mention of his *Self-criticism* before the Chapter rounds up with a return to *Individualism* and inclusivity, if that is not a contradiction in terms. (Most examples are taken from the *Papers*.⁸)

University

In Chapter 2 above, Kierkegaard's biographical data have been set out, but it may be in order to remind the reader here that Søren Kierkegaard first enrolled at Copenhagen University on 30th October 1830 (Kierkegaard's important dates are eerily memorable, not only this one. He was born on 5/5 and died on 11/11/55!) He studied the following languages: Latin, Greek, Hebrew. He had had Latin, German and French in school. Britain was at that time the arch-enemy and consequently Kierkegaard never studied English, but read Shakespeare in the German translation.⁹ At University, he also studied: History, Mathematics, Physics and Philosophy. For a while, he is put off by Theology, then after the death of his father in 1838, he returns to Theology and in 1840 seeks permission to sit his exam. He writes thus (in Latin):

But as I with every day distanced myself more and more from Theology and eventually sailed full blast into the study of Philosophy, which at the time with us had won particular popularity and esteem, it became clear to me that neither could I satisfy the demands of Theology, nor it mine, and I took my leave of it entirely.¹⁰

The 27-year old Kierkegaard continued his letter with astounding honesty, saying that for the sake of his father's memory, he had decided to return to Theology all the same. His honesty was rewarded and he completed his examination in July 1840, earning a *laudabilis*, the top mark. It is interesting, for the purposes of this thesis, to take a look at the exam questions relating to Judaism.¹¹ It will become evident that his studies at Copenhagen University formed the basis of his thinking and some ideas relating to Judaism came directly from his teachers. The exam took place in Latin and the Hebrew questions were far from rudimentary:

The Hebrew names for proselytes?

answer: ברית = [brit]

What is that in Greek?




answer [diatheke]

What is the original meaning of that word?

answer: - testament

The root of the Hebrew substantive?

answer: בָּרַת [barat] [There is no such root. ew]

Jews would say the word is [bar]= purity, and its root is [bara]=  = to create, to form.  [brit] means 'covenant'. The word for 'to cut' is  = 'carat'. No doubt, 'circumcision' has confused interpretation here.

Although a sub-section will follow below with more detail about Kierkegaard's knowledge of Hebrew and his reflections upon it, there is certainly enough material there to form the basis of a longer paper on that subject alone. The treatment below will have to be a shorter version. It can, however, be said already now that Kierkegaard's enthusiasm was fairly short-lived and only sparked off by his necessary study thereof. His comments mostly involve a single word, rather than a whole sentence, but his deductions are often logical and fair. Too often, however, he is seeking 'proofs' in the language to support his idea that Judaism is inferior to Christianity and while the logic might hold, reality does not always bear him out. The search itself is significant, testifying as it does to an unstated first premise.

Other exam questions, not involving language, can also be mentioned here:

Did the Roman Christians consist of former Heathens or Jews?

This is another issue which will run through all Kierkegaard's religious works and the *Papers*, which for a great part are in fact just drafts to his writings, reverberate with it. Kierkegaard firmly believed that the two groups would arrive at two different brands of Christianity. The Jews, especially, were, in his view, bound to arrive with 'baggage', most of which undesirable.

Why were the Jews driven out of Rome under Claudius?¹²

This is obviously a more historical question. On the whole, the Christian questions are more intricate, more 'advanced' and those to do with Judaism and Hebrew seem both simplistic and tendentious.

During the time up to the exam, 1839, Kierkegaard's intense preparations are illustrated by this remark in his journals:

I read Hebrew with one person in the afternoon, will take one more

for the morning and one for walking
with and thus work up a Hebrew
knowledge within closed machines,
like Deichmann's chocolate.¹³

The interesting one is the walking lesson: Did Kierkegaard attempt spoken Hebrew? It is hardly likely. Presumably, they could discuss grammar and the roots of words, their symbolism. One has to assume that it was with tongue in cheek that he spoke about his private tutors in terms of 'one for this and one for that', as if they were inanimate, like the machines, maybe parts of the machine. Certainly, his *laude* came neither easy, nor cheap.

With the exam over in July 1840, Kierkegaard was soon into his doctoral thesis on 'Irony' which he defended in September 1841, but his comparative studies of Christianity and Judaism never ceased, starting with the Romantic archetype, the Wandering Jew, and ending with particular Jews who had offended him, with Old and New Testament fighting it out in between. One could almost say, he started with the ethical, then moved via the religious, to the esthetic. In 1840, in October, it was not all hate. One can even perceive a slight envy, when he writes to his fiancée like this:

It is winter now [as it would be in Denmark], but the festival of Succot was celebrated in the winter. Let me then also erect my succa [*Løvhytte* = hut of foliage]. I am sitting quite still inside it. An atmosphere of awe and solemnity, not possessed by Nature, has fallen upon it, because Remembrance sanctifies it, but Nature is without a past. It is a child that does not know the pains of life, but neither does it know its joys, a child smiling innocently but unable to narrate about anything. - If you wish to see this my succa, there is a drawing attached. Ordinarily, one uses young freshly gathered shoots, not dry sticks without scent and without flexibility. -

Your S.K.¹⁴

'Succot', also called 'Feast of Tabernacles', is in Danish called *Løvsalsfest*, or in Kierkegaard's time *Løvsalernesfest*, meaning 'Feast of the Halls of Foliage'. (Note that the 'huts' have been elevated to 'halls'.) It is this latter concept Kierkegaard finds so inspiring. He is careful to point out that he is not a Heathen, 'Nature does not possess such awe and solemnity. Nature is a child, it can smile, but it cannot narrate.' Still, like a child, Kierkegaard attaches a drawing, but perhaps this is poetry and not logic. Kierkegaard recognizes a joy within Judaism which he cannot find in his own Christianity. He was taught Christianity by an

old man, he says, and it was a melancholic religion. This was the father who took his son on outings inside one room, in the imagination. Here is Kierkegaard again on an outing inside one room, but it is into a room and it is full of joy and his beloved is at his side, not an old man obsessed with death. This is life and not death, it is also Judaism! It is a rare moment and never was Kierkegaard happier, one month into his engagement to Regine Olsen. He would never approach Judaism that positively again.

Before moving on to the sub-sections, it is worth noting that a contemporary Danish/Danish dictionary (contemporary with Kierkegaard) defined the word 'Jewish' thus:

Jewish [*Jødisk*], adj. that which applies/belongs to the Jews, who are of Jews. The Jewish History, The Jewish People, The Jewish Religion. - It was formerly used constantly in daily speech for: immodest, shameful in taking advantage, usury etc. A Jewish price, interests. To act Jewishly with someone. - (One consequently also named a usurer, who wanted to be counted as a member of the Christian congregation: a Christian Jew.)¹⁵

The word 'anti-Semitism' or 'Semitism, Semitic'

do not occur. 'Usury' [Aager] is defined as 'illicit interest'.¹⁶ It should be emphasized that Molbech wrote 'formerly' [*tidligere*], meaning 'not any more'. Kierkegaard's language tends towards the archaic and some commentators, e.g. Kirmmse, have argued that for Kierkegaard, 'Jew, Judaism' and related terms, were not directed at Jews specifically, but functioned as general terms of abuse (See Chapter 6 below). However, the evidence is so detailed and so plentiful that there can be no doubt that for Kierkegaard, these words came increasingly to stand for 'Semite, Semitism' and everything one today calls 'anti-Semitism'. But already, the excuse does not hold, because why should it be offensive to be called 'a Jew'? It is not offensive to be called 'an Englishman'. The very use of the word as an insult is anti-Semitism, as already mentioned.

It is time to look at the groups of evidence, before returning to Kierkegaard's initial statements and some Jewish counter-arguments.

The Eternal/Wandering Jew

As so often in Kierkegaard scholarship, the problem of translation is at once evident: The Danes use the term 'the Eternal Jew' [*den Evige Jøde*], stressing the immortality of the figure. The English use the term 'the Wandering Jew', stressing the rootless, homeless, lost character. In some pre-World War II literature, one can find the two combined as 'the eternal wandering Jew'¹⁷ in Germany. Kierkegaard refers to German dissertations, written in Latin in the 17th century '*de Judæo immortalis*' or '*de Judæo non mortali*'¹⁸, that is to say 'the immortal Jew' or 'the Jew who cannot die'. The 24-year old student Kierkegaard is naturally enough fascinated by the idea of immortality as a negative and he notes down some lines of German poetry which really 'squeeze the lemon', so to speak. First, A.W.Schlegel (a contemporary of Kierkegaard's):

*Ich bin nicht jung, ich bin nicht alt,
Mein Leben ist kein Leben.*¹⁹

['I am not young, I am not old/My life is no life.']

Then, Wilhelm Müller (1823):

*So zieh' ich Tag und Nacht einher,
Das Herz so voll die Welt so leer,
Ich habe Alles schon gesehen
Und darf doch nicht zur Ruhe gehn.*²⁰

['Thus I travel day and night to this place,/The heart so full, the world so empty,/I have already seen it all/and yet I am not permitted to lie down to sleep'.]

These verses are dripping with sentimentality. All the same, they mark Kierkegaard's first tentative steps into a subject that was to spell-bind him for the rest of his life. The Jew was tragic, romantic, an archetype, like Faust and Don Juan. However, since in Danish, the Jew is 'Eternal', in English 'Wandering', this does pose problems in the translation. For instance, Kierkegaard remarks in his journal in 1835 (aged 22) that,

(The eternal Jew seems to have his prototype in the fig tree which Christ bid wither away.)²¹

If translated 'wandering' here, the whole point is set askew, because the issue is not the wandering but the living or dying forever, or 'eternally'. The passage in the New Testament can be found in Matthew 21:18-21. Christ walks

out in the morning and presently feels hungry. Spotting a fig tree, he expects juicy fruits but finds only foliage. In his anger and frustration, he bids the tree die and it does, at once! In other words, the tree fails to soothe the suffering Christ and must be punished, eternally. The punishment is not eternal life, but eternal death. The legend which so preoccupied the young Kierkegaard is parallel in that here Christ is stumbling along with his cross and spotting the workshop of the Jew, Ahasverus, he begs to be allowed to sit inside on his stool for a moment, in the shade, and rest. Ahasverus says No and the dreadful punishment is swift to follow: He must wander the globe, denied a home and denied a death. Like Christ, he shall not rest, ever. Like the tree, he failed to soothe and so must be punished.²² Incidentally, it is odd that the name Ahasverus/Ahasuerus has been chosen for this purpose. It occurs only once in the Bible, in the Book of Esther, where he is the righteous king who helps the Jewish people survive. Was there a deliberate attempt to soil the name in the eyes of the Jews, or was the name to be punished too? The legend has strong elements of

'spin', as has a similar legend on the Jewish side of comparable age:

the contract, or covenant, produces the result that God has acquired Israel, which God created. The reason is that only Israel accepted the Torah, among all the nations, and that is why God made the covenant with Israel in particular...The Gentiles did not accept the Torah, Israel did, and that has made all the difference.²³

'The Gentiles' means 'the non-Jews'. In the Hebrew Bible the word 'goy' is used and translated into 'nation', 'goyim' is 'nations'. 'Goya' lies at the root and this word simply denotes 'body'. In ordinary speech in contemporary English and American English, the word 'goy' has strong vulgar and negative overtones, meaning something close to 'that disgusting thing over there who is not one of us'. The Jewish claim to being 'chosen' has over the centuries been nearly as offensive to the other side as the Christian claim that 'the Jews killed Christ'. Here is a legend to help the individual Jew carry his 'heritage'. 'We were not chosen for nothing. We chose the task and took upon ourselves the burden that no one else wanted. We were asked last and only we took it up'. A reward is not the same as a random

honour, it is earned and deserved. These two legends seem very man-made and they certainly serve a purpose: 'It is not necessary to respect the other! It would be wrong to respect the other.'

Many of Kierkegaard's notes and thoughts about archetypes went straight into his *Either/Or* (which was not published until 1843, approximately 2 years after he had defended his thesis on *Irony*). He writes:

The three big ideas (D. Juan; Faust and the Eternal Jew) represent, so to speak, Life outside of Religion in its three-fold direction, and only when these ideas in Life go over into the individual person and become transitional, only then come the moral element and the religious element. Thus is my view of these three ideas related to my dogmatic standpoint.²⁴

The 'big ideas' do begin to merge later on as they share crucial features, such as 'eternal damnation', 'immortality'. It is interesting that the great hope of mankind, to achieve eternal life, and in the mind of the true Christian reached with the death and resurrection of Christ, is turned to dust with the disappointment of Dr Faustus and the hell on Earth of Ahasverus. Eternal life is only desi-

rable if it can be heavenly. The Eternal Jew cannot kill himself either, according to Kierkegaard, he cannot end his own life, for his life is not his own, in a very Greek sense. His life belongs to God. Kierkegaard writes about Faust:

Faust cannot commit a suicide. He, as the idea floating above all its factual embodiments, must complete himself in a new idea (the Eternal Jew).²⁵

A suicide, of course, would turn this idea too much into a character. It has to be the counter weight of the whole world which crushes him, as in D.Juan. - Or end in despair (the Eternal Jew). Despair is a romantic punishment, unlike the way it was with Prometheus.²⁶

Faust is a type, he cannot be allowed to turn into a character, he must not have personality. It was Goethe's *Faust* that Kierkegaard studied. Here Heaven and Hell battle for the soul of Faust and eventually it must go to one of the two. Dr Faustus, after a life of study in his dusty room, is offered a 'new lease of life' by a servant from Hell, Mephistopheles. A contract is entered into, a 'covenant'. Faust is to be young again, handsome as never before, and he can have any wish fulfilled: love, power...anything that might bring him bliss and

tempt him to say to the moment:

Verweile doch! du bist so schön!

[Faust I,1.1700]

Eternal life is already assured, but will it be blissful or agonizing? The big temptation is to ask Time to stop at a moment of great happiness, to wish to be forever happy. Paralysis is perhaps another kind of eternity:

The eternal Jew is the petrified wife of Lot, returned to consciousness.²⁷

She is looking back forever with her full capacity to suffer at what she is seeing, eternal suffering never dulled for a second.

Finally, the Eternal, the Wandering Jew has been brought into the realm of the Old Testament, the Books of Moses. The Jew of the legend is predestined to lead others to Christianity, the Promised Land, but he cannot himself enter it. In other words, the Eternal Jew, the Wanderer, has become...Moses! Israel is now Christianity. From a Jewish perspective, this is a pernicious use of the Bible. However, eventually Kierkegaard himself ends up being Moses. In his father's mind, according to young

Kierkegaard, this fate had been certain from the start:

Regarding little unpleasantnesses, I shall only remark that I am busy reading for the theological certificate, an occupation which does not interest at all [sic] and which consequently does not proceed terribly fast. I have always liked much better the free, and perhaps therefore also a bit uncertain, study than the served-up kind at the closed table...However, since it remains a necessity, and one is hardly allowed into the scientific open spaces without being burnt-in, and since I furthermore consider it something helpful for myself, given my current state of mind, and knowing that I would thereby give Father a great joy (as he is of the opinion that the real Canaan lies on the other side of the theological certificate, but climbs, like Moses before him, Thabor and reports, that I shall never enter. - Still, I hope that this time too it will not be fulfilled), then I suppose I had better pull myself together.²⁸

The transitions are almost seamless. A year later, he writes:

How beautiful is the preparatory relation of Judaism to Christianity as outlined in the legend about the Eternal Jew (compare: *ein Volksbüchlein* [=*Volksbuchlein*] p.27), where it is described as the end-stage of his life that he perpetually accompanies those who come from distant parts, in order to visit the holy land.²⁹

Then, as a mature person:

...that I, like this wandering Jew

of a beautiful legend, should lead the pilgrims to the promised land and not myself enter it, that I should in this way lead people to the truth of Christianity and carry it as my punishment for previous strayings that I would not myself enter it, but dared only predict a wondrous future.³⁰

This non-entrance becomes in Kierkegaard's mind synonymous with expulsion from another territory, namely the Synagogue. The idea that a worshipper could be cast out of the temple, as illustrated in the New Testament, occupied him a great deal and the image occurs again and again in his writings.³¹ At first, it symbolizes the difference between the harsh and primitive Judaism and its 'successor', the Christianity that would never exclude anyone, but receives all equally lovingly. Later, during the 'church battle' in his last years, perhaps he felt again a similarity with his own predicament and again he was the one expelled, the one not allowed to enter, whilst established religion came to resemble Judaism, as he perceived it. He also uses the metaphor in relation to a contemporary: Grundtvig, who had very different ideas about what the Church; now the Danish State Church, or the 'People's Church' [*Folkekirken*], should be.³² Kierkegaard writes:

...; now he stands on Thabor and

prophecies, realizing that it is the lot of the prophet, not himself, to step onto the holy land, not himself to partake in the wondrous future, which he envisions in a century or two's distance - until he suddenly, occasioned by a public entertainment, discovers that it has come to pass and that one now has to call it a day.³³

From the point of view of 'anti-Semitism', there is a fluidity here. The Jew who denies Christ any solace, is forever cast out of humanity to wander the earth homeless and tortured by guilt, condemned to lead others to Christianity but not permitted entry himself. He turns into Moses, into Kierkegaard, into Grundtvig. The Christ who casts the curse on Ahasverus:

I leave, but you must wait for my coming.³⁴

turns into the Jewish congregation casting out the non-conformist, then back to the Danish Church, the Danish people, casting out Kierkegaard himself. At certain points, one sees clear examples of anti-Semitism and its rationalizations, but then the abstract idea takes over and becomes a tool in Kierkegaard's writing to describe insider/outsider. Other reflections in the early oeuvre focus on the difference between the Old Testament and the New.

Old vs. New Testament

Kierkegaard recognizes that the premises, which he calls 'categories', are vastly different in the two Testaments and this gets in the way perpetually:

The most difficult thing of all is that one has both the old and the new Testament, because the old has quite different categories. Thus, what would, I wonder, the new Testament say about a faith that intends to get very good conditions in the world, in the temporal, instead of relinquishing this in favour of the eternal. This gives rise to the inconsistency in the clerical lecturing, being dependent on whether the old or the new Testament is transparent within it.³⁵

Certainly, most people would agree with this. The Old Testament is part and parcel of Christianity, one cannot understand the New Testament without an intimate knowledge of the Old. This difficulty runs through Kierkegaard's authorship, it is part of Christianity, and there is a kind of love/hate relationship there. Sometimes, the Old Testament is used to 'prove' the badness of the Jews, at other times to show the goodness of God. There can be no reconciliation, because, as Kierkegaard points out, 'the categories differ', the first premises

are diametrically opposed.

The sacrifice of the only son is central in Christianity and Kierkegaard speaks movingly about Abraham and Isaac in his *Fear and Trembling*, but he remarks:

And he who spared Abraham's firstborn, and only tried the faith of the patriarch, he did not spare his only son.³⁶

This passage in the Bible, is in Judaism named the 'Akedah', i.e. the 'binding', since Isaac was not sacrificed, only bound.³⁷ Christ was not spared, but had to die in great pain and humiliation. Kierkegaard ponders this difference. When it comes to the Crucifixion, he is not very emphatic about the guilt, or non-guilt, of the Jews. If it was God's will that his son should die,

One really wonders whether indeed the voice of the people was God's voice, when the Jews shouted crucify!³⁸

If the Jews acted out God's will, they could not be blamed, but how does one know? The words above can be read either way. One can find places where the blame seems squarely placed upon the Jews for the crucifixion of Christ, but it is not the main drive behind Kierkegaard's animosity towards Jews, as it might

have been elsewhere. Often the name 'Pharisees' is used, especially in the teaching of children to forestall anti-Semitism on that background. It is understood that the awareness that Jesus was himself a Jew, is perhaps a more modern phenomenon. Kierkegaard does not seem to see it that way: 'Jesus was of course a Christian, how could he be a Jew? He was heterogeneity, which was why the people had to go under.'³⁷

However, negative attitudes in Kierkegaard spring perhaps more from what he perceives to be Jewish interpretations of the Old Testament (the *Torah*, as it is called by Jews). The idea of hierarchy between the religions seems ingrained in him and for once, he does not disagree with Hegel. Judaism, he said, was a developmental stage in the history of Christianity, just as Christianity might one day prove to have been a stepping stone for something else. Kierkegaard writes:

To the Christian now considering Judaism, it probably would appear that Judaism was only a transitional point; but who could guarantee us that not the same is the case with Christianity.⁴⁰

As shown above in this chapter, some laws are identical in Jewish and Christian liturgy, one of them being, 'You shall love your neighbour'. Another is that this love must manifest itself in deeds. Kierkegaard refers to James I, 22 ff. in his *Self-examination*:

be ye doers of the word, and not
hearers only, deceiving your own
selves.⁴¹

So, it is not true to say that Christianity is without rules to be obeyed, or that Judaism is a religion without love.

Kierkegaard never used the argument 'state within a state'⁴⁰ because there were too few Jews in Denmark for this to be an issue [approx.4000 (Wergeland-1841)]. So, again historical reality forms the philosophical theories of the day. One could say both men moved towards the more pragmatic with age. There has never been any evidence that German Jews had ambitions to make Germany a Jewish state.

These last ideas are not Biblical but serve as a contrast to Hegel's initial conceptions about the Jews, which were Biblical, as Kierkegaard's were literary. In the following

section, the difference between Judaism and Christianity, as perceived by Kierkegaard will be discussed.

Judaism vs. Christianity

Kierkegaard's thoughts about Judaism and Christianity fall into five groups: law vs. love, monotheism vs. polytheism, the Hebrew language, Lutheranism vs. Judaism, Islam and Catholicism, self-criticism.

Kierkegaard writes in his Journal, at the age of 35, that

Everything depends on how developed one's idea about God is. The idea of the Jews was, however, not nearly as well developed and clean and spiritual as the notion of God has become through Christianity. But so much the greater is also the strength of the outrage: that a human being was God.⁴²

Certainly, Judaism does not allow an image of God which has 'shape or form'. In the Jewish Prayer Book, thirteen principles of the faith are listed and Principle No.3 says:

I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name, is not a body, and that he is free from all the accidents of matter, and that he has not any form

whatsoever⁴³

The principles were first set out by Moses Maimonides in the 12th century. This is the argument of differing 'first premises' or 'categories'. Kierkegaard assumes that a detailed, humanoid image of God, is good; where Jews consider it blasphemy, i.e. 'bad'. If the primary values are not agreed upon, there can be no 'good' or 'bad'. While the Ten Commandments are shared by Jews and Christians, the Thirteen Principles are not. Therefore it is no doubt true that so much the greater is the outrage that Jesus could be called God. The entire concept of the Trinity is unacceptable to Jews. Principle No.2 says:

I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name, is a Unity, and that there is no unity in any manner like unto his, and that he alone is our God, who was, is, and will be.⁴⁴

A 'Father, Son and the Holy Spirit' is three, not one, i.e. polytheism in the eyes of Judaism. However, Judaism also operates with a 'spirit', the *shechina*, which is feminine, grammatically as well as conceptually. This is why God is sometimes a 'he' and sometimes a 'she' in the Hebrew text of the *Torah*. Kierkegaard does not mention these points which are as old as Judaism

itself, more than 5000 years.

One should not have thought it difficult to differentiate between one and two, or one and several, when it comes to gods, but going back to the ancient Egyptians with their plurality of gods, there seemed to have been room for confusion even then. John A. Wilson writes in an excellent book on ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia entitled, somewhat challengingly, *Before Philosophy:*

The fluidity of Egyptian concepts and the tendency to synthesize divergent elements have led some Egyptologists to believe that the Egyptians were really monotheistic, that all gods were subsumed into a single god...With relation to gods and men the Egyptians were monophysites: many men and many gods, but all ultimately of one nature.⁴⁵

Wilson concludes that it was "not monotheism; it was monophysitism applied to deity".⁴⁶ *Monophysis* means 'one nature' in Greek. When the singular is used for God, Wilson states that it refers to the 'system' not any of the many gods. This is a period about 4-1000 years B.C. In a later section of the same book, H. and H.A. Frankfort ponder on the arrival of true monotheism on the stage with the Hebrews, as

they call the Jews:

The differences between the Egyptian and Mesopotamian manners of viewing the world are very far-reaching. Yet, the two peoples agreed in the fundamental assumptions that the individual is part of society, that society is embedded in nature, and that nature is but the manifestation of the divine. This doctrine was, in fact, universally accepted by the peoples of the ancient world with the single exception of the Hebrews.⁴⁷

The Frankforts state that:

The dominant tenet of Hebrew thought is the absolute transcendence of God. Yahweh is not in nature. Neither earth nor sun nor heaven is divine; even the most potent natural phenomena are but reflections of God's greatness.
...

The God of the Hebrews is pure being, unqualified, ineffable. He is *holy*. That means that he is *sui generis*.⁴⁸

For the sake of this argument, it seems the Frankforts have found for themselves a working definition of the one God and that the detachment from nature, encouraged by the desert, so that God was no longer nature, but the one who made nature, spelt the transition from polytheism to monotheism.

This brings the discussion back to the old

problem of first premises, because there is no logical reason why many gods is bad and primitive and one god good and civilized. Neither is there a reason why 'love' is good and 'law' bad. Of course, everyone wants 'love'. Law is not such an unequivocal good as is love. In western society, one god is thought to be the *sine qua non* of an acceptable culture, thus the endless slanging match where one religion is calling the other polytheistic. Kierkegaard scours the Hebrew language for 'evidence' of primitive roots religiously, as will be shown below. 'Many' is usually 'good' and 'few' or one 'bad'. So, why not in religion? Surely, if one has many gods, there is always another one to go to, if one lets one down. One could also argue that 'law' is 'love' and that 'justice' does not always mean that one is going to benefit. It is important to remember this when evaluating Kierkegaard's remarks about Judaism. Although Kierkegaard seemed aware that the 'categories' in the Old and the New Testament differed so much as to be irreconcilable, he did not keep that in mind or apply it very much. Jewish life is regulated to a great extent. There are dietary laws, or 'rules', laws for personal

hygiene, for behaviour, for clothing, for relating to others when they grieve. This is true. Anyone can read about it.⁴⁹ Most of the rules come from the Old Testament/Torah and others have been laid down by rabbis, who were thought to be wise and well-intentioned. Rules may be a restraint, in the same way laws can be, but they may also provide great freedom. They are a kind of 'etiquette' as well as a subtle language, as any reader of Jane Austen or George Eliot will know. Sentences like: 'Why should I put up with your silence?', or 'Why should I leave the bath clean, I don't mind the dirt!' make one realize how far basic agreements about good and bad could slide without rules. Kierkegaard might see his advantage in this kind of argument. He could say, 'Precisely, this is why we must just share first principles and start from there.' So: 'Laws are bad!' Which is more or less what he does do.

Kierkegaard suggests that,

Judaism had developed into its own parody when Christianity came: in the Law through the Pharisees - in the prophecies through the idea of an earthly Messiah.⁵⁰

It is true that religions can go through phases

where one aspect or another is especially emphasized. Michael A. Meyer writes, for instance, as a Jew about Jews in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century that:

Feeling and fantasy were banned from religion as much by Kant as by the *Aufklärung* [Enlightenment].⁵¹

(The Jewish word for *Aufklärung* is *Haskalah*, השכלה, *Haskel* means 'understanding' and is the root of the word.) Jacob Katz in his book *Out of the Ghetto* writes, likewise from the Jewish perspective, that 'Jews were persuaded that Judaism was emotionally vacuous and many converted in order to find "love and gentleness"'.⁵² So, for instance, Henriette Herz (one of the 'Salon Jewesses', the others being Rahel Varnhagen and the Mendelssohn daughters Dorothea and Henriette)⁵³ "dismisses Jewish religion as a dull practice of mechanical observances"⁵⁴ while Dorothea Mendelssohn 'went first to Protestantism and then on to Catholicism'. She had left her Jewish husband in order to live with "the romantic philosopher", Friedrich Schlegel, "preferring the elevation of the personality to the dull tread of duty". Many more Jewish women than men converted. Katz writes:

Religion to the romanticists meant the Christian religion, Judaism being explicitly or tacitly excluded from the definition. The reason for this was partly the old partisan definition of Judaism as a religion of law, that is, of observances and prohibitions. Traits of inwardness and spirituality in Jewish religion were either overlooked or discarded. This evaluation was strengthened by the statement made by Moses Mendelssohn - the accepted authority on Judaism - that the unique content of Judaism reposed in its law.⁵⁵

So, there are Jewish arguments to support Kierkegaard's impression of Judaism as a rule-obsessed religion with little spirituality. In another book called *Emancipation and Assimilation*, Katz gives the Jewish side to Kierkegaard's argument that Judaism was a developmental stage of Christianity:-

Nothing was more intensely resented by Jewish apologists than the Christian claim of possessing the higher morality. As the Italian rabbi, Elijah ben Amozegh, writing in the '60s of the nineteenth century, asserted: 'If there is anything that retards the coming of the great day [of reconciliation], it is the superiority which the daughter arrogates to herself over her old parent - Christianity over the religion of Israel - in the matter of morals'.⁵⁶

One can of course argue either way: 'old is best' or 'new is best' and Kierkegaard does both, when on the one hand he says Judaism has

served its purpose and now ought to die and on the other that Islam is a newcomer not to be taken too seriously:

It is fitting that the Muslims use the weapon which so strikingly characterizes their relationship with the Christians, namely the moon, borrowing its light from the sun.⁵⁷

Kierkegaard also derides Judaism on issues to do with sex and procreation. He compares the Jewish emphasis on the Family with the Christian ideal of Virgin Birth and Celibacy, to the advantage of Christianity, but really this is the trick of the first premises again, for who can prove that one is superior to the other! It is a choice, although Kierkegaard admits that if all Christians became celibate there would soon be no more Christians in the world. Looking at the next quotation, one might notice that the famous indirectness is at work again:

As the Jewish women considered it a disgrace to be childless, so the Christian ought to consider it a disgrace to be without tears (that like children are God's gifts), and pray, like Rachel, that God will open this the heavenly human being's womb - and viscera -, and through the sincere emotions of the heart give the proof that there has been conceived

Should the Jewish woman be ashamed to desire children and not tears? This is a strange concept and perhaps the quotation says more about Kierkegaard's type of Christianity than in fact about Judaism. What kind of religion is this, that considers tears 'gifts of God'? But the idea that Jews favour the material and tangible, such as children, will be treated in more detail later, under the Social aspects.

Kierkegaard often reflects on what he sees as Jewish vengefulness taking his starting point in the Old Testament decree of 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,...'. In his notes to *Works of Love*, for example, he writes:

The Jewish and temporal and busy Measure for Measure is: as others do to you, take great care that you do the same to them. However, the Christian Measure is: as you do to others, likewise will God do to you. In this way there is Measure for Measure, a Measure for Measure is part of Love; only, in such a way that the Christian element turns itself upwards, because understood in the Christian way, love for people, loving them is loving God.⁵⁹

That passage illustrates first of all the uneasy relationship there is between Christianity and the Old Testament. He picks and chooses, leaving anything unacceptable to 'the Jews'. It

also illustrates the common misunderstanding that the Old Testament is all there is to Judaism, which equals the idea that the Gospels is all there is to Christianity. Many prayers in the Jewish liturgy contain sentences like 'Deal kindly and justly with those who go astray', 'If any design evil against me, speedily make their counsel of none effect', 'make peace' etc.⁶⁰ Revenge is thought to belong to God. The Jew is not required to love his enemy, but on the other hand: is the Christian? To quote Michael Meyer yet again:

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, among the outstanding representatives of the German Enlightenment...The son of a small-town Lutheran preacher...In 1749 he wrote to his father,

"As long as I do not see one of the foremost commands of Christianity, to love one's enemy, better observed, so long do I doubt whether those are Christians who pass themselves off as such."⁶¹

With the last few pages in mind, it is perhaps not difficult to see that both Jew and Christian might agree with Kierkegaard in what he writes below:

The person, who in his childhood has never been under the Gospels, but only under the Law, will never be free^{xx} - perhaps it is unfair, but there is something noble in that; while the more developed the Law becomes, the more little teasings sprout forth, and nothing

is more able than the Law to produce pettiness. The eye has a power to coax out the seedling of goodness, crushing the wickedness - whereas the misguided severity and chastisement, a daughter of complacency, will almost allow one generation to take revenge over the next for the floggings it had itself, and the abuse it suffered itself, by treating the next in the same way.

xx) A state somehow becomes un-free, through giving itself the Law.⁶²

There is no disagreement about the fact that admonishment alone will not produce the good person, but somehow it seems as if Kierkegaard simply assumes that it will. He is contrasting the Gospels with the Law and knowing that elsewhere the Law is Judaism, it does not take great analytic skill to deduce that the Law here too means Judaism. The insert is driving the point over the edge, obviously. There just *has* to be bi-polarity all the time. Things are black or white, nothing in between.

It is not possible to include all the lines of attack which Kierkegaard employs in his treatment of Judaism. Those mentioned above are but a few specimens. In the next section, attention will be given to Kierkegaard's reflections on the Hebrew language in relation

to the Jewish faith.

The Hebrew Language

As explained above, the accusation of 'polytheism' is an insult, although 'many' is generally better than 'one' and despite the fact that polytheism has a very good record when it comes to tolerance. The Old-Testament God declares in several places that 'I am a jealous God'. It was shown above that both Christianity and Judaism operate with a God, a Spirit, and a Messiah. Although the Jewish Messiah is still expected and even described as 'the son of David' in the Prayer for the New Moon,⁶³ and in:

Principle 12

I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah, and, though he tarry, I wait for his coming.⁶⁴

the Messiah is there, in the Jewish faith. Some Jews will say that 'Messiah' is a 'time', an *époque* when perfect understanding between men is achieved, or when perfect obedience to the Law has been accomplished. Nevertheless, the similarity to the Christian 'Trinity' is close despite the words of Frankfort, but still Jews

will say that Christianity is polytheism and Kierkegaard will say that Judaism is polytheism. He fetches his evidence in the Hebrew language:

Monotheism is forever hiding within Polytheism, without it therefore floating around everywhere, as with the Greeks ('the unknown God') as if in an abstract^x possibility over it.

29th May 37.

^x)the abstract Polytheism, however, one finds in the *Pluralis* of the Jews' *Elohim*, without any total or distributive predicate Gen.3: 22 ~~מִן־לָנוּ~~ ['from us one'.ew]. Here the *Pluralis* through its connection with the Singular, indicates the absolute Singularity of the Plurality. (See Göschel).⁶⁵

Elohim is indeed the plural of *el* which means 'God', and it is true that when God discovered Adam and Eve had eaten from the tree which would give them the knowledge to discern good and evil, he exclaimed: "There, the man has become like one of us!" 'because he will know good and evil' - '*Hine, haAdam haja c-achad mi-menu*'- but like Frankfort, Kierkegaard suggests that unity and plurality are perhaps not so clearly defined and one can shade into the other. The old rabbis write in their commentary that the plurality is simply the 'majestic plurality'. God is after all a King. Another Jewish reading

is that 'us' means 'us angels', but God is the speaker and he would hardly include himself with the angels. Already, the talk of angels here, all of a sudden, becomes problematic. (Kierkegaard's order of the two words is wrong. The Hebrew says 'like one of us', not 'from us one'.)⁶⁶ Of course, the central prayer in Jewish liturgy, the *Shema*, said in Hebrew, means 'Hear Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!' In fact, literally, the Hebrew says: 'Listen Israel, Yehova is our God, Yehova is one', but God's name is not to be pronounced and ultra-Orthodox Jews will not even write 'God'. Instead, they will write 'G-d', or *haShem* [the name]. This is one thing Kierkegaard likes in Judaism, as will be shown below under 'Self-criticism'.

It does happen that he is simply marvelling at what the language can do, and is not point-scoring:

This is the union of the subjective and objective side of the observation, the way it always sounds in the Hebrew ראו וראה, he saw and see.⁶⁷

The sound of the two words is '*jaré v-hiné*', although these are not two verbs. The first

word is a verb, the Biblical past of 'see'. The second word is an adverb, an interjection, 'there!', with the prefix 'v-', meaning 'and'. However, this discrepancy does not change the overall message. There are very few such neutral language points, most are loaded against Jews and Judaism. As already stated, he is only marvelling here.

In a more general vein, he remarks:

The Jews constantly projected themselves back into the past (they did not just physically but also mentally write - from the right to the left) but precisely the more forcefully they pressed themselves backwards in this way, the more urgently the soul sought something on-coming, which was like a result of the light-particles which the eye had absorbed staring at the past and which now lit up all the stronger in the empty and dark present, within which they felt themselves bound. Thus they lacked the calm security of the genuine evolution.

21st Feb. 39.-68

This assumption is so comical that one almost suspect it is a tongue-in-cheek remark, yet the elaboration is serious enough and one cannot maintain the suspension of disbelief. Kierkegaard is again playing with first principles, wittingly or unwittingly, when he assumes that

left to right is 'forward' and right to left 'backward' and with 'backwards' he really means 'regression' a return to less enlightened times. Of course, 'backwards' is not necessarily a negative movement either. Were two people to measure a wall of a house and held a measuring tape between them while they both moved backwards towards the corners of the house, no one would say that they were not making progress, on the contrary. A painter painting a landscape might move his brush in both directions and he would not think one inferior to the other. A Jew reading the Hebrew script would think it entirely the right way, going from right to left. It will become clear when reading the section below on the Social aspect of Kierkegaard's remarks that here he argues the opposite way. Here, he holds it against Danish Jews that they were trying to improve themselves financially and socially, they were desperately trying to integrate, to 'pass', i.e. looking to the future.

It is one of the symptoms of racism that whatever the minority does, it is automatically defined as wrong, even when one act might be

diametrically opposite to the other. Kierkegaard is arguing 'backwards' here. He starts with the conclusion that 'Jews are backward' and then sets about looking for some 'proof'. A culture looking back upon a history of over 5000 years, is automatically disadvantaged when compared with one that looks back over just 2000 years, if remembering is deemed to be 'bad'. Later in that year, he writes with some self-irony that, "I take all sorrows in advance, and yet they all remain". So, one can be sad looking forward and it can be a bad thing to look forward too much.⁶⁹

In the next section, the issue of other minorities will be taken further, to include Muslims and Catholics. Other groups of people, like 'the poor' and 'women', are not minorities, but they are suppressed and powerless. They have been discussed at length elsewhere and also need a separate treatment as the issues are slightly different, and they certainly need much more space than can be given to them here.⁷⁰

Islam and Catholicism

It is surprising that Kierkegaard should occupy himself with Islam, then called *Muhammedanism* [*Muhammedanismen*] in Denmark, but he was a keen reader of *The Arabian Nights* and in 1839 preparing for his exam in Theology. However, one cannot call him tolerant when he attempts to set up a hierarchy of religions:

As one is watching the religions on their historical expedition, wandering through the world, then the relationship is this: Christianity is the real freeholder, sitting inside in the carriage; Judaism is the driver; Islam is a servant, who does not sit with the driver but at the back.⁷¹

This is breath-taking arrogance! It is not really a philosophical point, more an attempt at literature, a kind of 'thought experiment', for which Kierkegaard had a predilection. Even in his own day, this was an astonishing statement (as described in Chapter 1 above).

With regard to the Catholics, H. Roos in his short book on Kierkegaard and Catholicism asserted that Kierkegaard had no Catholic friends.⁷² He did not properly study the

important Catholic writers, e.g. Thomas Aquinas, even though he owned some of the necessary books. Roos finds that his thoughts, had he lived longer, could have led him, like Newman, to a conversion to Catholicism. Roos never mentions Kierkegaard's links to the Herrnhuttern in Denmark and what these could have effected (these have been treated at length in Chapter 2 above). Because he did not convert, Roos finds him to be a lesser man. Roos goes as far as to say that:

It is...a fact that to some of the best thinkers of our time, he has been an 'in-between-station' on the way to Catholicism.⁷³

Kierkegaard constantly criticizes Luther, on the other hand; unlike Grundtvig (See Chapter 1), he did not ascribe much importance to the sacraments. He is 'the prophet of individualism', because he defends subjectivism and rejects the Church, the institution.⁷⁴ Kierkegaard himself writes about Catholicism very directly, pointing also to the fact that the Pope calls himself *servus servorum* [the servants' servant]:

The Catholic Church is the contrast to Judaism; there it was God in his majesty who came down to Earth, wanting to be preserved in this his

majesty (thundering at Sinai) and because of that, this historical moment, when Heaven was on Earth, is exempted from reflection, while on the other side one clings to it as closely as possible. As God is in his majesty, so too is the whole *Cultus* next to the humility which is imputed by the sense of being nothing before the Lord and this precisely has the majestic externals - in the church it is the human being who gradually rises, is raised up and helped up by God - God starts with his debasement - Christ assumed the apparition of a servant and still the Pope calls himself *servus servorum*. Judaism fetches God down from Heaven. Christianity fetches the human being up to Heaven.

30th October 38.76

One does not discern in this fragment that Kierkegaard greatly differentiates between the two kinds of Christianity, his own Danish Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. It seems rather that the comparison is between Christianity as a whole and Judaism (as a whole). The result is, again, that Christianity triumphs, for surely it is much finer to be 'fetched up' than to go and 'fetch down'. Kierkegaard does not offer a contrasting piece of evidence to his *servus servorum* and insofar as Christ was God, he certainly came down, while the Jews are still waiting. Furthermore, as long as the Ten Commandments are part and parcel of Christianity as well as Judaism,

Christians cannot distance themselves from whatever happened on Mount Thabor. A few months later, Kierkegaard writes in his journal:

Father in the Heavens above!
Wander [*Wander Du med os*] with us
as you used to wander with the Jews
in times bygone, in the old days!⁷⁶

It is difficult to imagine, perhaps, for a Christian, just how offensive this passage would be to a Jew! It is a breath-taking usurpation! And on the background of the long quote above, it is quite strange that God's coming down should be desired.

In the next section, it will be demonstrated that Kierkegaard could find the occasional positive thing to say about Judaism and the more than occasional negative one about his own, religion and people.

Self-criticism

In the discussion above, on the Hebrew language, the name of God was mentioned and there is another reason to return to that fact. Kierkegaard actually likes the awe and modesty implied in a rule not to over-use the name of God, not

to become too chummy with God. He writes, again in his *Papers*:

Just as the Jews dared not pronounce God's name, so the analogy is to be found within Christianity by the use of the Latin language during the service. One had advanced as far as allowing the clergy to pronounce 'God', but the congregation is not able to.

29th Sept. 38.77

This is perhaps a grudging compliment, because he almost takes it back to use it on himself: 'the Jews had a point, but the same thing is to be found within Christianity' and yet the passage peters out when he comes to think that it is not really fair that the believers were simply made unable to address their own God, as Latin was not spoken by the majority of people. Kierkegaard returns to the point ten years later and then writes:

It is really quite strange that the Chinese have the same custom as the Jews. The name of Confucius is Khu or Ju; but when the name occurs in the holy books, the people have been forbidden to pronounce it and on the contrary told to read it as: Mou. Just as it is with Jehovah. In Christendom, it is really also too bad with the flippant way in which Christ's [*Christi*] name is pronounced.⁷⁸

Here, the praise has become unequivocal and the self-criticism much to the fore. It is just

ironic that he still proceeds with his Latin, and then again, there is some logic to it. Throughout Kierkegaard's works one does find this Latin treatment of religious names, especially 'Jesus' and 'Christ'. It is a loss when most translations choose to leave it out entirely, so that the English-speaking reader has no idea it ever was there.

Kierkegaard was always critical of the Danish people, finding it small-minded and mean, but it is surprising and amusing to find that he sometimes enlists the Jewish people to further emphasize his point. The following two examples of this were written in 1847 and so rather late in the *oeuvre*:

This is Denmark's misfortune, you see - or this is the punishment of Denmark, a people without true fear of God, a people that only has village gossip for national consciousness, a people that adores being nothing, a people where schoolboys are judges, a people where those who ought to rule are afraid and those who ought to obey are impudent, a people where every day one can get a new proof that there is no public sense of propriety [*Sædelighed*=*Sittlichkeit* (a Hegelian keyword)] in the land - a people who has to either be saved through a tyrant or through a couple of martyrs.⁷⁹

In the next fragment, he comes out even more clearly, although one can already observe in the above that certain Jewish qualities, like a fondness for rules and obedience, have now come to seem rather attractive. But Kierkegaard is now beginning to move on to the more social side of the comparisons:

There is a stupidity and an impudence which only thrives in provincial towns, that is what I have to endure and why, because I live in Denmark, and because Denmark is going into dissolution ...[sentence incomplete]. A small people that imagines that it has a quarrel with the whole world, and is at the same time dissolved to such an extent and undermined by envy and pettiness, that it hardly resembles a people anymore, or rather, only resembles one people, which is no people, the Jews. Jew-
envy towards Jew is world famous,
next come the Danes.⁸⁰

So, the comparison has moved from the positive to the negative, the Danes are almost as bad as the Jews, almost!

To end on a nicer note and to move back towards individualism and tolerance, it can be mentioned here that, like many other students of the Hebrew language, Kierkegaard found delight in the fact that the Hebrews said 'to know one's wife' instead of 'making love' or 'having sex':

The more difference of individuality, the more pronounced the individuality,...., the more there is to know.

So, in this far deeper sense can be seen the meaning of the Hebrew 'to know' one's wife, which is said about the gender difference, but the same applies in a far deeper way to the mental side, to the imprint of the individuality.⁸¹

It is a different matter that the Hebrews far more often 'went in unto'. (See for instance Gen. 6:4).

The Works

Kierkegaard's journals were divided by earlier editors into classes of A, B, C according to whether they were a kind of diary or drafts for the works or comments on his reading (See Chapter 3), but quite often Class A remarks went into the works also. So many, many negative remarks on Judaism and Jews can be found transferred into his current work. He writes about Christ's expulsion from the Synagogue and the difference between being born into a religion and being baptized into it. On the other hand, as Roos finds Catholic sentiments in Kierkegaard's works, so Jews find Jewish sentiments in them. The point of *Works of Love*, that love has to be

expressed in deeds, is a deeply held Jewish belief also. The discussion of revengefulness can be found in the *Works of Love* and one can compare the journal-draft with the final version here.⁸²

Return to Individualism

One could here go back to the initial quotation, about who is one's neighbour, and one could bring in a new one that makes the same point:

If there lived a human being, who by his difference was an exception from the idea of being a human being, then the concept 'human being' is confused: if the exception is not a 'human being' then neither are the other human beings 'human beings'.⁸³

In other words, if one found one human being too different to be called human, then there is no such thing as a human being, for 'human being' is all inclusive and there is no exception. Everyone is included. Or, were one to be cast out as not belonging, no one belongs.

Chapter 5

NOTES

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2. (eds.) Heiberg, J.L., Drachmann, A.B. et al., *Søren Kierkegaards Samlede Værker* (1920-36), Bianco Luno Press, now Gyldendal, Cph., DK. 2nd ed., Vols. I-XIV [=SV]. Vol. IX, *Kjerlighedens Gjerninger*.

(ed. & trs.) Hong, H.V. & E.H., *Kierkegaard's Writings* (1978-2000), Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1st ed. Vols. I-XXVI [=KW]. Vol. XVI, *Works of Love*.
3. SVIX, p.74, KW XVI, p.60. (Hong tr.)
4. SVIX, p.60, KW XVI, p.47.
5. *Eruv*: Area around synagogue enclosed by symbolic fence to allow Jewish men and women to carry items (incl. small children) with in it, when otherwise forbidden. (See *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol.6, (1971) Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem Israel, pp.849-50).
6. (tr.) Rev. E. Singer, *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book* - of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth of Nations (1962), Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, U.K. *Deuteronomy* vi. 4-9, p.41.

Bibelen, autoriseret oversættelse af 16. december 1931 [authorized translation of 16th December 1931] *Det Danske Bibelselskab* [The Danish Bible Society], Cph, DK. [SK used an earlier ed. of this publication]. *Femte Mosebog* [5th Book of Moses = *Deuteronomy*], Chapter 6, verses 4-9.

See also *New Testament* [= N.T.], Mark 12:30.

7. SVX, p.103, KWXVII, p.85, *Christian Discourses*.
8. (ed.)Thulstrup,N., *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer* (1968-70), Gyldendal, Cph., DK. Vols.I-XIII [=Pap.].

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9. Schlegel & Tieck's tr. (1839-41). See Notes to KWXVI, *Works of Love*, pp.524-5.
10. (ed.)Thulstrup,N., *Breve of Aktstykker vedrørende Søren Kierkegaard* (1953), Munksgaard, Cph.,DK., p.8, Letter XI, *Examenspetition* [Exam Petition], [= Breve].

(eds.& trs.) Hong,H.V.& E.H., KWXV, (tr.) Rosenmeier,H.,*Kierkegaard : Letters and Documents* (1978),[Nos.same as in the Danish original] [= Letters].
11. Roos,H., *Søren Kierkegaard og Katolicismen* [Søren Kierkegaard and Catholicism] (1952),Ejnar Munksgaard,Cph.,DK.,p.10: "...one ought to also at some stage investigate how his professors at University, especially the professors of Theology, have presented Catholicism."(tr.ew).
12. *Letters, ibid.*, p.9-12 (Letter XII). Exam date 3/7/1840.
13. *Pap.II*, A823, p.280, u.d.[undated] (1839). [Not in Hong]. Thulstrup provides the following footnote: "*within closed machines etc.*] see for instance *Adresseavisen* [The Address Newspaper] (1839), No.270(16th Nov.) compared with 1838: No.13 (16th Jan.) and Appendix for No.225 (22nd Sept.)."

A kind of blending method still on display in Skovbogade, Cph, (v.similar to a chocolate fountain) where SK would have had his daily walks.

14. *Letters, ibid.*, p.35 (Letter 22), Oct. 1840
Thulstrup note:
"Feast of Tabernacles [*Løvsalernes Fest*] is celebrated 15th-21st Tischri (in October)."
Also called Succot. Can fall in September or October. The Jewish calendar is different from the Christian one, it operates with leap months rather than leap days, i.e. the addition of one month in the leap year rather than one day.
15. Molbech, C. (1783-1857), *Dansk Ordbog* [Danish Dictionary, i.e. Danish/Danish] (1859), Cph., DK., p.1150.

Christian Molbech was a friend of SK's. See notes of *Letters* edited by Thulstrup and translated by Hong. He was intimate enough to be allowed to read SK's mss. before they went into print. He was a historian and linguist and enjoyed considerable esteem in his lifetime.
16. Molbech, *ibid.*, p.3.
17. Beth Shalom, Nottingham. Postcards from 1930s' Germany.
18. *Pap.I*, C64, p.222 (1835). [Hong 5112].
19. *Pap.I*, C120, p.300 (1836-7). [Hong 5198].
20. *Idem.*
21. *Pap.I*, C65, p.222, 28th March 1835. (Strictly speaking, SK was not 22 until 5th May that year.) The passage in *N.T.* is *Matthew 21:17-22*. [Hong 5087].
22. See *Pap.I*, pp.222-300 [or Hong 5112, 5122, 5193, 5194] C64, C116, especially. SK provides details of his sources, mainly German, going back to the mid-17th century. In *Pap.I*, C62, pp.221-2, 13th October 1835 [Hong 5111], he writes:
"The legend about the eternal Jew can

be found, retold in its entirety, in
Ein Volksbüchlein, München 1835....".

23. Neusner, J., *The Classics of Judaism* (1995),
Westminster John Knox Press, Louis-
ville, Kentucky, U.S.A., p.156.
24. *Pap.I*, A150, p.90, March 1836. [Hong 795].
25. *Pap.II*, A56, p.43, u.d. (1837). [Hong 1184].
26. *Pap.II*, A50, p.41, (1837). [Hong 1183].
27. *Pap.I*, C120, p.300, (1836-7). [Hong 5197].
28. *Pap.I*, A72, p.51, 1st June 1835. [Hong 5092].
(Also in *Letters*).
29. *Pap.I*, A299, p.129, 4th December 1836.
[Hong 2210].
30. *Pap.VI*, B40:33, p.131, (1845). [Hong 5797].
31. *Pap.VIII,1*, A428, p.187, (1847). [Hong 2719].
32. See also Kirmmse, B., *Søren Kierkegaard's
Golden Age Denmark* (1990), Indiana
University Press, Indianapolis, U.S.A.,
for a longer explanation about Grundt-
vig and what he represented. Many
would say he promoted a 'happy-clappy'
Christianity, where Kierkegaard's was
a solitary ascetic preoccupation, a
dialogue between man and God. Kierke-
gaard was no doubt greatly influenced
by his father's and mother's commit-
ment to the Herrnhuttern outlook (also
called the Moravian Brothers) (See
Chapter 2).
33. *Pap.VI*, B33, p.115, (1845). [Not in Hong].
34. Ingemann, B.S., *Blade af Jerusalems Skomagers
Lommebog* [Leaves from the Pocket-book
of Jerusalem's Cobbler] (1833), C.A.
Reitzel, Cph., DK., p.30.
35. *Pap.IV*, A143, p.54, (1843). [Hong 1507].
36. *Pap.II*, A569, p.209, 13th September 1839.
[Hong 298].
37. [akad] = to bind. O.T.[Old Testament]
22:1-24.

38. *Pap.VIII, 1, A199, p.98, (1847). [Hong 2925].*
39. Vermes, G., *Jesus the Jew* (1973), Collin, London, U.K.
40. *Pap.I, A49, p.22, 2nd May 1835. [Hong 2208].*
For further reading on this, see:
Pinkard, T., *Hegel, a biography* (2000), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K., pp.684-5 (Notes). Reference to "Kant, I., *Religion within the limits of Reason Alone* (tr.) Green, T.M. & Hudson, H.H.), pp.116-18". See also:

Hegel, G.W.F. (1770-1831), *Philosophy of Right* (tr.) Dyde, S.W. (1821, tr.1996) Prometheus Books, Amherst, N.Y., U.S.A. p.263 (Note to §270, see also §209).

See also Malantschuk, G. *Frihedens problem i Kierkegaards Begrebet Angest* (1995) C.A.Reitzels Forlag, Cph.DK. 141pp. Pp.59-64.
41. N.T., James 1:22 ff. (James becomes 'Jacob' in the Danish N.T.)
42. *Pap.VIII, 1, A585, p.270, u.d. 1848. [Hong 3028].*
43. Singer, *Ibid.*, p.93.
44. *Ibid.*, same page.
45. Frankfort, H. & H.A., Wilson, J.A., & Jacobsen, T. *Before Philosophy* (1946, 1971) University of Chicago Press, Chicago, U.S.A. and Penguin, Baltimore, U.S.A., p.75.
46. *Ibid.*, p.107.
47. *Ibid.*, p.241.
48. *Ibid.*, p.241-2.
49. Turner, R. *Jewish Living* (1982, 1985) Jewish Chronicle Publications, Ldn., U.K. and Greenberg, B. *How to run a traditional Jewish Household* (1983) Simon & Schuster, N.Y., U.S.A.
50. *Pap.I, A287, u.d. 1836. [Hong 2209].*

51. Meyer, M.A., *The Origins of the Modern Jew* (1998) Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A., p.86.
52. Katz, J., *Out of the Ghetto* (1973) Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A., p.120. I owe the two refs. (Katz & Meyer) to Dr. Peter G.J. Pulzer, Oxford University, U.K.
53. Meyer, *Ibid.*, pp.85-114.
54. Katz, *Ibid.*, p.120.
55. *Ibid.*, p.120.
56. Katz, J., *Emancipation and Assimilation - studies in modern Jewish History* (1972) Gregg International Publ. Ltd., U.K., p.117.
57. *Pap. II*, A88, p.55, u.d. 1837. [Hong 2736].
58. *Pap. II*, A547, p.203. [Hong 448].
59. *Pap. VIII*, 2, B67, p.120, u.d. 1847. [Not in Hong]. Cf. *SVIII*, p.304 or *KWV*, p.56.
60. Singer, *Ibid.*, p.56 and elsewhere. This Prayerbook was first published in 1890, but the prayers in it are of an older date, of course.
61. Meyer, *The Origins....*, p.17.
62. *Pap. II*, A12, p.13, u.d. 1837. [Hong 265].
63. Singer, *Ibid.*, p.157.
64. *Ibid.*, p.95.
65. *Pap. II*, A73, p.48, 29.5.1837. [Hong 1306].
66. (ed.) Hertz, J.H., *Pentateuch & Haftorahs* (1996/5756) Soncino Press, Gateshead, U.K. & Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A., p.13.
67. *Pap. II*, A541, p.202, 26.8.1839. [Hong 2272]. Kierkegaard used for his Hebrew: Gensenius, G.F.H.W. *Lexicon manuale hebraicum et chaldaicum in veteris testamenti libros* (1833) Leipzig. It contains Arabic as well.

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(ed.) Cappelørn, N.J., Garff, J., Knudsen, J. et al. *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter* (2001) Gads Forlag, Cph, DK, Vol.18 with commentary, Vol.K18. See KK7. (Both the above references have been given me by Cappelørn, N.J. Latin will be needed.)

68. *Pap.II*, A372, p.148, 21.2.1839.[Hong 4788].
69. *Pap.II*, A540, p.201, 24.8.1839.[Hong 5407].
This passage refers to the Hebrew point/vowel system, using it as a metaphor.
70. About Kierkegaard's attitude to women see for instance: Bertung, B., *Om Kierkegaard, Kvinder og Kærlighed : en studie i Søren Kierkegaards kvindesyn* [About Kierkegaard, Women and Love : a study on Søren Kierkegaard's view of women], pp.99, held in the British Library, Ldn. (1987), C.A.Reitzel, Cph., DK.
- There may not be a study on 'Kierkegaard and the Poor', but Kirmmse, B., *Golden Age, ibid.*, does give a detailed description of Denmark's poor in the countryside and class divisions in the 19th century Denmark. Brandt, F. & Rammel, E., *Søren Kierkegaard og Pengene* [SK and the Money] (1935) Munksgaard, Cph., KD., is a very reliable source on Kierkegaard's lifestyle with some vignettes on Kierkegaard's relationship with servants. To my knowledge, not yet translated into English. (2009)
71. *Pap.II*, A499, p.189, u.d. 1839. [Hong 447].
72. Roos, H., *ibid.*, 51 pages, given as a lecture to the Søren Kierkegaard Selskabet [Society] on 22.1.1952, p.10.
73. *Ibid.*, p.50.
74. *Ibid.*, p.49.
75. *Pap.II*, A283, p.123, 30.10.1838.[Hong 244].
76. *Pap.II*, A327, p.136, 16.1.1839.[Hong 3373].

77. *Pap.II*, A265, p.117, 29.10.1838.[Hong 243].
78. *Pap X,1*, A73, p.56, u.d. 1849. [Hong 6324].
79. *Pap.VIII,1*,A531,p.243,u.d.1847.[Hong 4127].
80. *Pap.VIII,1*, A131, p.64, u.d. 1847. [Not in Hong].
81. *Pap.VIII,1*, A462,p.205,u.d.1847.[Hong 2003].
82. *Pap.VIII,2*, B67, p.120, u.d. 1847. [Not in Hong]. *SVIX*, p.432, *KWXVI*, p.383.
83. *SVIX*, p.164 (tr.ew), *KWXVI*, P.142.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS OF QUOTATIONS:

II THE SOCIAL EVIDENCE

Religiously, Kierkegaard's anti-Jewish remarks fall into two groups: the internal and the external, that is: the purely Biblical and the Clerical. Equally, the social remarks fall into two groups: the general and the particular, i.e. remarks about all Jews and remarks about Goldschmidt, one Jew. Some issues upset Kierkegaard more than others and he would write about them over and over in his *Journals*. It seems almost as if he tried to write these out of his system in a kind of psychoanalytical way, but reviving past traumas does not always remove the pain and the analysand is forced to return to the memory repeatedly without relief. So, Kierkegaard would relive his humiliation at the hands of the people responsible for the editorship of the Danish version of *Private Eye*, *The Corsair* [*Corsaren*] (See also Chapter 2). This Chapter

will look at these different strands which will eventually all join as Kierkegaard begins to see Judaism in everything, especially the Church and its clergy. The emphasis will be on Kierkegaard's own words.

Goldschmidt and The Corsair

Søren Kierkegaard's understanding of 'the Jewish Question' took a turn from romantic curiosity and Biblical comparisons to a hostile preoccupation with Jews and Judaism in general, and Goldschmidt and his *Corsair* in particular, when the latter began to influence his most private life and make him a pariah in the streets of Copenhagen.¹ Certainly, his scandalous dissolution of his engagement to Regine Olsen in 1841 had helped to prepare him for the role. Ironically, *The Corsair* was started at the same time as the engagement. The details of these dramatic events are set out above (Chapter 2), but they have to be kept in mind when analyzing Kierkegaard's many remarks on Goldschmidt, the Jew, and *The Corsair* [*Corsaren*]. It was not until 1845 that the *Corsair Affair* really blew up and the diary at once begins to deal with the

subject. The anger is at first directed at P.L.Møller in an aside that somehow fails to become a full sentence:

and like Mr P.L.M.'s visit to Sorøe through a Corsair-attack on peace-loving and respectable men, who in decent obscurity go about their business, on excellent men who by nothing at all have made themselves ridiculous.₂

One senses the speechless fury in the very confusion of these words' constellation. Kierkegaard is still shocked and surprised. However, it becomes clear that Goldschmidt, as creator and editor of the magazine cannot possibly be innocent, especially as the attacks continue and turn into a kind of sport illustrated by cartoons. He writes in the same passage:

that a Jew ingratiatingly tells us that he is a Jew and then proceeds to admonish other Jews for their awkwardness, ending by assuring us in grease-painted solemnity: that Jews in Denmark must carefully fight their way to *Respect*.₃

And that is the beginning of a series of less than flattering comments on Goldschmidt. To be insulted by another academic was bad, but to be insulted by a Jew was more than bad. That was the core of the humiliation. A year later, he

is still writing in similar tones:

In the magazine, someone calling himself a Jew admonishes other Jews in Denmark to proceed cautiously in order to force an entry into Danish esteem.⁴

"Everything has been turned upside down in this way", he complains.

The Corsair speaks a foreign language, a modernized jargon which it is impossible for any Dane, as well as any reputable Jew, to understand.⁵

At least, here there is a distinction made between 'reputable' and 'non-reputable' Jews. It is true enough that 'to force someone' to feel anything, be it love or respect, is a self-contradictory pursuit, as, surely, any sign of respect that was forced would be worthless. However, for comparison, Kierkegaard praises such a paradox in his *Works of Love*. How can one have a duty to love, he asks, how can one love on command. It is simple, it is a paradox and beyond reason, it is Christianity. He continues on the same page:

Because *The Corsair* is a Jewish uprising against the Christians (the opposite of a Jew feud).⁶

On a later occasion, he has inserted the following moderation:

and against the other Jews, insofar as they refuse to accept *The Corsair's* teachings on Respect.⁷

The decent Jew is still a possibility. With a Copenhagen population of about 125,000 citizens and less than 3000 subscriptions to *The Corsair*,⁸ it is rather an exaggeration to talk about 'uprisings'. He goes on:

aided by *The Corsair*, a Jew, paradigmatically to other Jews, wants to force his entry into Respect, opening a refuge to any literary tramp [*Lazaron*], and a dumping ground to any despicable inventiveness of impetuous passion'

The theme is the same: 'He wants to force me to respect him!' but the treatment becomes more and more elaborate as he writes:

So far, to be sure, it has only succeeded with the money. But he forces his entry into it, he does not directly beg. Because, look! There he sits in the basement door, the Idea of *The Corsair*, the Master, He Himself, the Dominator, the Office Holder, the Basement Guy, The Charlatan Prince, the Pawn Jew, or whatever one wants to call him, the Stranger, whom no one knows, but about whom everyone knows that on solemn and critical occasions it is his wont in regal manner to let his elevated person be represented - only, he lets it be represented by rascals. Look, he threatens in the magazine, he threatens: This one and that one has to go into the magazine, he has to feel my terrible wrath! Look, he threatens, he cries: "Revenge!

Revenge!"⁹

Kierkegaard makes another insertion towards the end of the piece, but this time, it has the opposite effect of the last one: no longer the dominator, the Jew is now a simple, petty criminal:

When a Copenhagener travels to Odense, the first thing he asks is: 'Is there a lot of Jew-bother [Resches] in this town, i.e. are you terribly pestered by the Jews?'¹⁰

The annoyance over the actions of one Jew has escalated and he is now conjuring up a picture of hordes of Jews tormenting decent Danes in the larger provincial towns. While he allows for the individual, respectable Jew, the Jew Danger grows before his eyes, all because of one Jew. P.L.Møller is quite forgotten.

Soon Kierkegaard's concern for himself extends to others:

Young authors become vexed and gloomy, lose the motivation to achieve something or do so unwillingly, because to publish something is synonymous with becoming scorned in *The Corsair* by a vicious Jew who wishes to intimidate with his talent. Older authors tire of getting trampled by geese.¹¹

The concern for the 'vexed young authors' here rather pales against the background of the dog-

like Jew. It now transpires that this is only a build-up to the fact that 'the vicious Jew' has himself become an author. He has published a book.¹²

Goldschmidt now himself turns into a publisher of a book in line with the authors of Danish literature. And it is the same Goldschmidt! But to be an author of Danish literature is an honour, ethically, and so it should be. Anyone who places himself there has to know that he is standing amongst the diligent. The Danish people knows that to be an author in Denmark is a modest living and it appreciates all the more the fact that its poets and authors, of whom no one, not even Oehlenschläger, has earned money, of whom no one, not even Heiberg, who could have had brilliant conditions abroad, has got his living costs...The Danish people therefore appreciates that its authors remain faithful to the people and the language under frugal conditions.¹³

'Goldschmidt, on the other hand, has it both ways. He earns pots of money by throwing dirt at people and at the same time claims the status of a true author.' "This is not to be tolerated!" is the end of the piece. In the next piece, he remarks, as an addendum:

The legitimate ruler in Danish literature, Prof. Heiberg has wanted to do nothing about this nuisance.¹⁴

Later in 1846, Kierkegaard can report

that *The Corsair* has observed the following:

It was half past two and it was for the third time that M.[Magister] Kierkegaard walked back along Østergade (to which is added a drawing).¹⁵

Or maybe he is just parodying the perceived smallness of that magazine's outlook. One cannot help thinking it funny, one way or the other, but of course, it is at Kierkegaard's expense.

But things can get much more personal than this. Comments now follow on each other's clothing. It is all spotted in the street. Goldschmidt comes into possession of a tailor-made coat, over which much trouble has been taken. It has Russian-style cords sewn onto it and has a military cut. Kierkegaard is outraged and finds it necessary to pull him aside in the street in order to tell him to leave off such ridiculous attire. Goldschmidt is mortified and blames his tailor. Kierkegaard goes home and writes in his journal:

In the consciousness of the various nations, Jews are thus commonly considered cowards, and yet it is a fact that among young Jewish males, one finds a great propensity for walking around dressed as if trying to look like officers.¹⁶

Again, 'a single individual' is being turned into a herd of identical animals, 'Jewish males', and one Cossack-like coat is turned into 'a great propensity' of all Jews for wearing military outfits. Kierkegaard returns to Goldschmidt for further ammunition:

3
The novel, published by Mr Goldschmidt, *A Jew*, has with psychological precision exactly emphasized this element. ...The hero, for thus is called the main character in a novel, therefore, the hero, Jacob Bendixen has just this military and war-like propensity; he even becomes a lieutenant in Polish employ, and when he returns home, he is constantly mistaken for an officer - even by people who have known him pretty intimately.

Then follows the *coup de grâce*:

8
The author has himself somewhere sketched out with a few strokes in front of us the interesting face of Jacob Bendixen: the Oriental features, which intelligence has ennobled, so that his nationality is close to unrecognizable due to the overwhelming intellectuality. Were one to let one's imagination complete this picture, it would be impossible to see him any differently than in a courageous cord-coat.

It seems he could not look Jewish and courageous at the same time, or intellectual and Jewish too. The tone of this piece is scathing, caustic, but '*størhed står for fald*' ['pride

comes before a fall']. Goldschmidt knew a thing or two about fashion as well. Kierkegaard recollects in 1847:

When a man has no straps in his trousers, then it gets broadcast in the newspaper straight away, and unconditionally gets read by the entire population...once, for more than a year, in print, a battle was waged over one man's trousers, whether they were, to be precise, too short by half an inch.¹⁷

And in 1850:

I was made into a caricature, known by every child - that is dangerous stuff.

But the most dangerous of all was, that they wrote that my trousers were too short, or even that one trouser leg was shorter than the other by half an inch.

This was the dangerous bit. It was connected with my character, that it had to do with pride...- they did not realize that there has in fact never been anything conspicuous about my clothing, and yet, on the other hand, were I to make any change at all, that would then be subjected to public discussion - and it happened (although I left everything the same), that it was reported in *Flyveposten* by P.L.Møller that now my trousers had become too long.¹⁸

Certainly, if revenge it was, it had been achieved on Goldschmidt's part, with the help also of his friend P.L.Møller, who gets hardly

any mention at all in the *Journals*. In 1847, Kierkegaard blames "the Common-Spirit", noting that:

Strangely enough: at the head of the Common-Spirit stands a Jew; and there is no sense of nationality in the country: yet, presumably Denmark is at war with all of Europe.¹⁹

Kierkegaard regrets also the embarrassment caused to his tailor, being dragged into 'the public arena' like that. The poor tailors!

Kierkegaard never connected his own critique of Goldschmidt's coat with Goldschmidt's (or his cartoonist's) of his trousers. In fact, Goldschmidt writes in his memoirs, *Livs Erindringer og Resultater*,²⁰ that he wrote most of the contents of *The Corsair* himself.²¹ It was schoolyard bullying, but Goldschmidt's being Jewish had nothing to do with it. All the same, for Kierkegaard, the insults were compounded by the fact that it was 'a foreigner' meting them out and he focused in on 'Jews' with a vengeance. He writes:

Perhaps the rightness of what I did will already now become evident. It would certainly have offended my sense of nationality, were a Jew to imply, having allowed himself everything, that he now abdicated

from the tyranny and went to Germany - in order to disseminate how we here at home were suppressed under the impudence of his magazine.²²

As so often, the pain will not go away and he therefore sharpens his verdict:

never has Denmark's Heirloom-Evil had such excellent conditions as when a slave-minded Jew exercised ruling power with a slave mind. The goddess of reason in France was a harlot (how deeply epigrammatical). The slave-ruler was a Jew-boy (how deeply epigrammatical).²³

Another facet of the idea that Goldschmidt wanted to be a wealthy satirist as well as a self-sacrificing, greatly honoured author, was the idea that Goldschmidt had presented himself as a member of a suffering minority in his book, *A Jew*, inviting sympathy, even pity, and at the same time he wanted to get away 'with murder' in his magazine. The public was enchanted to have a writer who needed its compassion. It did not see that it was disarmed by it and unable to defend decent people like himself from abuse.²⁴ While writing in 1847 about Adler, a single, dedicated writer like himself, Kierkegaard wondered how much criticism he could really take. He is reminded of how he once thought of Goldschmidt in those same terms, only to find

that he had better worry about himself:

Presumably, everyone will find this worry fretful, just as mine might have been once upon a time, that Goldschmidt should take my article to heart. How he triumphed, he who could make all pork butchers and grocers' apprentices, and the whole mob, and frisky students, and frivolous womenfolk laugh me out and mock me. Yes, of course he triumphed.²⁵

One feels sorry for one's enemy at one's peril, in other words. However, if one takes a liking to him, one becomes vulnerable in the extreme. What if there was liking on both sides? Kierkegaard continues:

But there was in Goldschmidt something better, and it was Goldschmidt's genuine opinion that I was the only one, whom he really esteemed and admired: well, now the question is, this better in him, what happened to it, did it not crack a little bit?

We now have access to both men's (almost) private thoughts and Goldschmidt's reminiscences do confirm the above statement as being the truth, but without that, one would have doubted Kierkegaard's judgement. Goldschmidt writes:

I did not really like him, although he remained an attraction...he had no love in his heart, [he was] neither gentle, nor humble..

... and yet, at times I was quite lost in admiration..there was in his head something almost like an Olympian...and when he then stood in front of me in this manifestation, I realized that one really ought to pass such people by, hat in hand, while lowering the gate for their little weaknesses.²⁶

Goldschmidt wrote this with hindsight in 1877, when he was fighting a fair amount of guilt feelings. It seemed to him, he says, that 'it had been prepared from the first that I should be the tool with which this was done to him', i.e. the public mockery,

I was in certain ways a blind implement, in other ways a responsible implement.²⁷

So, Kierkegaard's assessment was correct, he was admired by Goldschmidt. With regard to the 'courageous coat', Goldschmidt can provide the end of the story:

I...returned home and sent it back, to have the fur collar and the cord trimmings taken off.²⁸

None of them had any regard for the other's writing style. Kierkegaard was dismissive about Goldschmidt's 'modern jargon', while Goldschmidt wrote about Kierkegaard:

His language in itself was off-putting to me, because it was forced and mannered, and because this mannerism was coloured by self-love or vanity.²⁹

In fact, Goldschmidt's style has dated rather less than Kierkegaard's, but Kierkegaard probably always wrote for a small audience which could appreciate his many allusions and elegant little tricks. Kierkegaard himself wrote that when it came to making fun of his trousers, he could no doubt outdo them all:

I certainly undertake to write articles about myself and my legs of an altogether more witty nature than can Goldschmidt: But then again, the mob would not understand them.³⁰

Presciently, Kierkegaard wrote:

But a person who in this way despises everyone, if he has one he respects, then usually the judgement of that one becomes all the more important...One never becomes more dependent on a person than when one has truly and thoroughly gone too far against those whom one in reality respects.³¹

Goldschmidt desperately wanted Kierkegaard's approval, he never suspected that his Jewish ancestry would forever preclude that. Kierkegaard wrote, haughtily:

Goldschmidt again desires to win over the public. Well, in one sense, I do not blame him for that,

he is after all the one he is, entirely meant to profit from such a time of dissolution, partly despising himself, despairing, money-grubbing, without character. This is what I have constantly said about him, he is a not unremarkable phenomenon - he corresponds to a moral dissolution like a cholera fly to cholera. It is to me a little boring in a way, that I have to be obliged to press the point a little, for I would like to admit him his talent, as far as it goes.³²

It was only in private that Kierkegaard could say that Goldschmidt had some talent, and always in order to lead up to a 'but'. What does Kierkegaard mean by: 'he is after all the one he is'? It must mean that he is just one of many Jews. Like his kind 'he matches cholera like a cholera fly'. This is very offensive language and one has to remember that Kierkegaard actually edited his *Journals* for posterity.³³ So, again, one is not peeping into his privacy. His negative remarks about Jews as a group are quite frank and unashamed. He may have relied on certain people sharing his views. When he talks about 'the slave-ruler, the Jew-boy', it is but a faint echo of remarks found in another author's works which Kierkegaard read regularly, Martin Luther's. It is the same words and the same message:

"They hold us captive in our country. They let us work in the sweat of our noses, to earn money and property for them, while they sit behind the oven, lazy, let off gas, bake pears, eat, drink, live softly and well from our wealth. They...mock us and spit on us, because we work and permit them to be lazy squires who own us and our realm."³⁴

As these stereotypes are pressed down over the Jew of the 19th century, these preconceptions become self-fulfilling. Kierkegaard uses the word 'despairing' about Goldschmidt and that is of course, a keyword previously used about the Wandering Jew. The word 'despair' almost denotes 'Jew', in Kierkegaard's vocabulary. Jews, they both (Luther and Kierkegaard) suggest, abuse their 'host' country during periods of upheaval when stability and moral uprightness are most called for. Historically, there is evidence for the opposite state of affairs (See Chapter 1, above) and psychologically there is no evidence that Goldschmidt, or Danish Jews in general, despised themselves, more than what is normal and natural for any human being, Kierkegaard included. Goldschmidt was, in 'real life', a handsome, flamboyant ladies' man, so the 'self-hatred and despair' were well hidden away. However, what is really offensive and surprising to find in Kierkegaard,

is the constant refusal to see Goldschmidt as a person and the repeated references to him as a sort of Jewish clone, or product of all that is reputedly worst in Jews as a group. It is language that jars in Kierkegaard's writings, which, contrary to what Goldschmidt says, are often permeated with tenderness and concern. Kierkegaard's ideas of what Jews stand for are so fantastical, so second-hand, and so lacking in reality-checks that one wonders how he could be a philosopher. Unfortunately, it is human nature to compartmentalize and perhaps precisely philosophers are adept at this.

Kierkegaard elaborates on Goldschmidt's talent ("as far as it goes") saying:

Goldschmidt has...never had Idea
but probably Talent

So, the talent was not only small, but also unoriginal, according to Kierkegaard:

Then I dropped him a hint some time back that, apart from the immorality of the phenomenon, if there had to be just a mention of Idea in this or any such project, it would have to direct itself towards everything and not be so dim as to direct itself towards the Government. This hint was conveyed *en passant* with all the dignity which I observed towards him. But I knew my man and only later

encountered the small inconvenience
that he had actually told Professor
Nielsen...that I had said so.³⁵

In other words, Goldschmidt ought to stay out of
any criticism of the government,

The Corsair was liberal, it
hammered Christian VIII, Civil
Servants etc., *The Corsair* was a
plant of the opposition. 'Idea',
Goldschmidt has never had.

So, 'Idea' equalled staying out of pragmatic
politics. Note the little "with all
the dignity I observed with him". Why? What
was this aloofness about? In 1845, Kierkegaard
was 32 and Goldschmidt 26. Kierkegaard was a
Magister [M.A.], while Goldschmidt was a
journalist and author, having failed to achieve
the necessary grades to continue his academic
education. No, Kierkegaard was, in his own
mind, bestowing himself on a member of a race
and a religion of which he did not normally
approve. The quote above continues thus:

so much more now that Goldschmidt
in fact became dangerous, having
through *The Jew* become an object of
sentimental compassion because as a
child he had suffered much etc.

The Jew was Goldschmidt's novel which was
transparently autobiographical and was publi-
shed at the height of the *Corsair* Affair in
1845. Kierkegaard returns to the fact over and
over, saying that it unfairly disarmed any
criticism of Goldschmidt's otherwise appalling

activities.²⁹ Then comes an enigmatic remark:

He was a clever head, the only younger person I have really been aware of. He could therefore have become useful to me for the purpose of the aesthetic.

'Useful'? As a subject, a helper like Levin?

Kierkegaard goes on:

It was both laughable and lamentable, when he, tears in his eyes (as he was, what is often the case with that sort of people, easily moved to get tears in their eyes) said: How could you judge in this way my whole progress and not say one word to the effect that I do after all possess some talent.

One can picture the scene: Kierkegaard, the first generation aristocrat, cool and magnanimous, himself unmoved, making a note of 'this sort of people' and their tendency to get emotional. He concludes:

When I had spoken, I greeted him and bade him farewell, with the good-naturedness which I have always shown him, but also with the distance which I have always observed towards him.

Since then, I never spoke to him.³⁷

Note, "with the distance which I have always observed towards him." "Dignity/distance". The very same phrase as above. Here it is "distance", above it was "dignity", in any case a rigid, predetermined stance towards another

human being, who must be loved as we love ourselves.

The idea that after his book, Goldschmidt could get away with anything, is aired in the *Journals* at regular intervals. He could not be brought to justice by the literati because "he has after all himself so movingly portrayed what he has suffered as a Jew."³⁸ One can have some sympathy with Kierkegaard in his sense of righteous anger and feeling of helplessness in the face of public ridicule. *The Jew* is a self-pitying and sentimental novel and Goldschmidt had needed extensive assistance from fellow Jews in order to get the religious passages right, as he himself rarely visited the place of worship in Krystalgade.³⁹ Goldschmidt was a profoundly assimilated Jew and it *could* be said that he had it both ways. This, however, does not excuse Kierkegaard's many, many arrogant and inaccurate generalizations about Jews and Judaism. As has been shown, in the way he treated Goldschmidt, he was perfectly prepared to act on them.

Kierkegaard was no less critical of his non-Jewish fellows, of Copenhagen and Denmark as

a whole. 'It was all so small and petty, quite Jewish, in fact!' He even admonishes the Danes for being 'shy and timid with foreigners' and for harbouring

almost Jewish jealousy towards each other) pettiness, silly envy based on Equality-Splendour and the Adoration-of-Mediocrity, so that Pity is the only public virtue in Denmark...⁴⁰

Then comes the last straw:

I shall not deny that it has touched me painfully to notice the way in which Mynster has suddenly hit upon the decision to make Goldschmidt a protégé, regardless of the fact that he does regard him as a person who has caused much harm, as well as a person with no character - solely because he has attacked certain people, whom Mynster does not favour.⁴¹

For all the fatherly 'good-naturedness', this smacks of sibling rivalry, but that cannot be left without qualification:

The fact that Mynster has mentioned his name and quality: Jew in Parliament, is of course the unimportant thing; because to be mentioned in that way makes no difference.

In other words, being Jewish is no achievement and such mention is no cause for pride. The end of the fragment is worth including for all its

outrage and bafflement:

But just look at Goldschmidt, he gets so deliriously happy simply because his 'Excellency' has mentioned him, and G. has also managed to say, that Mynster is such an eminent stylist. And God knows what G. has actually read by him - maybe his sermons? And this is the same G. who incited the mob to go for me, because I had thanked the Firm Kts [Mynster's *nom de plume*, Kts, the middle letters of his three names: Jakob Peter Mynster] for what it had said about *Fear and Trembling!*⁴²

In the following section, more general expressions of anti-Semitism will be presented and discussed with the use of a selection of quotes. It has to be said that only quality can be demonstrated here, but the sheer volume of these remarks is overwhelming. One does not read many pages in between negative remarks about Jews and Judaism. There are more of the general remarks than of those specifically about Goldschmidt and *The Corsair*. Choices have had to be made with regard to inclusion in these limited pages. By quality is meant the quotes that most clearly show Kierkegaard's position.

General Issues

It has been demonstrated above that although Kierkegaard had no direct experience of Judaism and Jews, this did not prevent him from having and expressing very negative emotions and ideas about them. The spotlight has been cast on the Biblical, or religious, then on the area of *The Corsair* and Goldschmidt, and now finally comes the more General, or Social, area. The issues are many and remarks can be found in the *Journals* as well as the *Works*. There seems to be no sense of guilt or attempts to curtail the hostility of these. Often an opinion has been rehearsed in the *Journal*, before it then appears fully formed in the *Works*. There is no toning down for the public airing and not even in modern times have these free expressions of outright hate towards Jews been met with protests, not even from Jewish writers. This is very surprising, given the nature of Kierkegaard's remarks and the background otherwise of the highest moral standards.

The chronological development of Kierkegaard's anti-Semitism has been set out in

Chapter 4 above, so here the focus will be on specific extracts from the texts. Most of the examples come from the *Journals* as this seems the most genuine source, given the particular difficulties quoting Kierkegaard, as mentioned in Chapter 3 above. One example from the *Prefaces*, however, is illuminating for the purposes of this paper. Here Kierkegaard writes under the pseudonym 'Nicolaus Notabene' but there is no doubt that this is Kierkegaard speaking, in answer to Heiberg's remarks about some of his own works. This is an eighty-page piece of journalism *cum* review, returning fire in an ironic vein in 1844. Kierkegaard writes jokily:

Still, by the way, I nearly forgot something. That is what can happen, often even worse, that one forgets the most important thing. In the literary world, it is customary to make a holy promise. The ceremony is less certain. In prehistoric times, of course, one swore on Freir's hog, Hamlet swears by way of a pair of fire tongs, the Jews are even said to have done it in an indecent way. Still, the ceremony is not important. The promise is the main thing.⁴³

Kierkegaard refers to Genesis 24:9: "And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that

matter". The explanation of this seemingly strange procedure is that:

children are said to issue from the 'thigh' or 'loins' of their father. Therefore the formality of placing the hand under the thigh was taken to signify that if the oath were violated, the children who have issued, or might issue, from the 'thigh' would avenge the act of disloyalty.⁴⁴

This is a good example of how Kierkegaard uses the Old Testament selectively. Here it is for a secular purpose and his way of doing it is highly suggestive and reliant on his reader's ignorance. It reads rather like: 'Here we go again, the indecent Jews with the many children. Yes, we know all about them!' Kierkegaard shows not only a lack of respect but he sows disinformation about a whole group of people, knowing they had no remedy. Kierkegaard calls this 'reading for entertainment', certainly, it was not for enlightenment or up-lifting.

The thrill behind a malicious joke is that it makes it cosier to be inside, in the same way as it is nicer to be inside when it is very cold outside, the colder, the cosier. There cannot be an 'outside' unless someone is out there feeling

very lonely. The Christian ethic to do to others as one would like done to oneself, is also a Jewish one and the way to measure a joke for malice is to ask oneself, if one would like to be at the receiving end and why not. A joke can slip in a conversation, but a joke in writing has been drafted and honed, sent to the printers, proof-read and sent off again. It is as deliberate as a speech act can ever be. Kierkegaard, who was so fond of words, especially foreign words, also took delight in calling Jews by names, mainly imported from Germany. He talks about "the miserable *Skakkerjøde* who procures for one material advantage". This remark is also dropped *en passant*, inside brackets: 'It is really not important, but still...' Today, it takes some research to find out what precisely it means, but in Kierkegaard's time and place everyone knew; the less educated people were, the better they knew. A contemporary (1859) Danish/Danish dictionary written by Kierkegaard's good friend Christian Molbech can explain in detail: *Skak* means 'that which veers from the vertical or the horizontal line'. The verb *skakke* means 'to make something slope or slant'. Another verb

skakkre comes from the German *schakkern* and means 'dealing in old things, bric-à-brac, especially by wandering about selling them'.

Molbech then explains:

"The word *skakkrer* has been transferred from the German and is in particular being used about Jews, who from ancient [Arilds] times ran this kind of trade". P.E. Müller.

[Molbech's insert] 45

Of course, there is an allusion in the Kierkegaardian text to 'shady deals' and not always in the lower sections of society. Kierkegaard must have known that not all Jews were poor in Denmark, yet he always mentions them as money grubbers and has another word, also a German import, to describe what he means. He uses it like this:

aesthetic *Stüvenfængere* who like tramps [*Lazaroner*] let themselves be paid in cash for showing people places and views open free of charge to every-one.⁴⁶

So, 'these people have themselves paid for what is gratis to everyone'. Not a nice business! Molbech informs one that "*Styver*...[T.Stüber] was a 'common coin' in Germany".

Thus *Styverfænger*, in daily speech and low style about a person who

works, especially writes, only to make money.⁴⁷

'These people will do anything for money' is the message coming from Søren Kierkegaard. Goldschmidt is of course one such. Kierkegaard does not have to work at all, he has inherited, and so he can have opinions. Another much used term is Danish, *Pidskebaandsjøde* (*jøde* means Jew in Danish). It refers to street sellers of ribbons [*Baand*] to tie round a horse's tail, or, presumably, for ornamenting the whip (*Pidsk* meaning 'whip'), or any other equipment to do with horse and carriage. The word is perjorative and class directed. In his little parody on a writing sampler in his *Journal*, he shows that it was not just Goldschmidt whom he would patronize and keep at a distance. His secretary, the Philologist Israel Levin, had been asked to assemble a little book for school use with samples of the handwriting, in facsimile, of famous contemporary men and women. He naturally asked his employer, it would have been discourteous not to, for a sample and received an arrogant No.⁴⁸ For a while Kierkegaard was paranoid about his manuscripts, so easily accessible to his secretary. In the event, the book came out without a specimen from

Kierkegaard's hand. He thus forfeited a chance to appear with fellow writers such as Oehlen-schläger and Ørsted, but could not help sarcastically providing a specimen for his own amusement, keeping in mind the ethnic origin of the asker:

Writing-Sampler

Trial script of

A.B.C.D.E.F. Rosenblad [Roseleaf or Rosenblatt]

[corrected with pencil to
Godthaab [Goodhope]]

Author to be 49

Lovely whip-bands blue and red,
Yellow, green, grey and violet,
Come and buy, come and buy,
Don't make me forever fly,
Red, yellow and grey helter-skelter,
A good little Jew-boy, am I.⁵⁰

The irony is unmistakable and the 'humour' is again hammering on with the Jewish allusion.⁴²

The word 'whip-band' is an inadequate translation of *Pidskebaand* and all its connotations. Levin was, of course, Jewish like Goldschmidt. Not many other Jews came into direct contact with *Magister* Kierkegaard.

In a *Journal* entry of 1847, Kierkegaard pronounces on language and nationality:

'America', he notes, 'is the country with the most languages'. However, 'this is no perfection. One learned language remains the ideal'.⁵² He continues, without a single foreign term, by referring to Grundtvig, the arch enemy:

The Grundtvigian nonsense about nationality is also a retrograde step into heathenism. It is incredible what madness fanatical Grundtvig graduates can serve up. Th.Fenger, for instance, says that no one can be a true Christian except through nationality.

One is reminded of the phrase, 'No one comes to the Father except through me'. 'Nationality', therefore, becomes synonymous with Christ in this parallellism.

And this is the Christianity which wanted precisely to banish heathen devotion to the nationalities!

Kierkegaard always wanted a separation between Church and State and he saw Judaism as inferior for many reasons, but one was the references to nationhood which undoubtedly is part and parcel of Judaism, although some Jews explain that this 'nation' is a state of mind, or something to come, perhaps in another world. However, there is an incoherence in holding these two views simultaneously. Surely, 'one language' denotes one state, one shared nationhood! Were this to

be a language only for the 'learned', it would still fulfil many criteria for nationhood. One people! Kierkegaard followed this line to the last and ended up calling Grundtvig 'Jewish' and his Christianity 'Judaism' for this very reason.

For a man living in 'interesting times', Kierkegaard wrote very little in the way of political commentary, although some commentators find hidden meanings which can then be called political. It has to be remembered that the country was under strict censorship and experience in other countries has shown that after a certain period of time under external censorship, people will start self-censoring.⁵³ All the more surprising, therefore, to find a long note on his childhood co-religionists, the *Herrnhuttern*, or Bohemian Brothers, *Communism* and *Pietism*. This is a 'B-note', i.e. a draft for a work, in this case *A Cycle of Ethical-Religious Essays*. Kierkegaard wonders what would happen if human beings grew dissatisfied with their government: State, Church and everything belonging to it, like the arts, science and so on. With no centralizing power, there would be anarchy. Every person would become an

atom and one advantage would then be that God could relate himself to each individual directly. It would in fact, says Kierkegaard, become one huge Christiansfeldt, the then H.Q. of the Danish Hernnhuttern. It would become *Communism*:

that is to say: in such a way, there must be no difference between man and man; Wealth and Art and Science and Government etc. etc. are of the Evil. All human beings should become like workers in a factory, like the farm hands on a manor farm, dressed alike, eating the same food prepared in one enormous pot at the same times, in equal measure and so on, and so on.⁵⁴

Pietism would be more or less the same as *Communism*, and here people would get married by lot. They would go to bed at the same time and eat out of the same dish, in the same rhythm. It would seem that *Pietism* was one degree worse than *Communism*, but individuality would be totally suppressed. One would have expected that a man who felt so strongly about plurality would also be tolerant towards minority groups, like Jews. Since this is not so, there has to be in Kierkegaard's philosophical make-up some rather unresolved and painful contradictions and lapses of logic. One can observe these contra-

dictions in several areas, an ambiguity about marriage, for instance. One should have thought, from the above, that the Family and Marriage (as opposed to communal living) would be of positive value and, Kierkegaard does in many places, in *Either/Or*, for instance, speak admiringly about spouses and marriage, living together in dignity and peace, but then he also becomes very critical of the same and talks about the institution of marriage as a selfish, materialistic coupledness that can mainly be found in Jewish communities, but then more and more in Christian communities too. The whole world becomes contaminated by this worldly, non-spiritual, 'Jewish' way of thinking. Every priest became tainted in the eyes of Kierkegaard and basically 'Jewish'. This kind of remark begins to dominate the late diary notes. Maybe the fact that Kierkegaard never sought first-hand knowledge in this area, caused him to run out of specificity and his free-floating prejudices could then attach themselves to most things, including his own Christianity. He writes:

The Danish people will soon be a nation no more, but a flock like the Jews, Copenhagen no big city but a genuine market town. 55

A bit later that same year (1847), he writes:

Being a Christian because one has been born to Christian parents is a fundamental fallacy and sense deception, from which a whole mass of others derives. A person is Jewish by being born to Jewish parents; quite right, because Judaism is essentially linked to and bound up with natural determination. But Christianity is spirit determination, so that here, there is neither Jew, nor Heathen, nor born Christians.⁵⁶

Erroneously, Kierkegaard continues that "One cannot very well *become* a Jew", because if a Jew does not believe, he is still a Jew, while a Christian, who does not believe, stops being a Christian. With that, Kierkegaard accepts the Jewish claim to be a nation. He does not deny it, but he thinks it inferior. In fact, it has always been possible to *become* a Jew, thus individually to accept the Covenant. The difference is that Christians will evangelize, while Jews are not allowed to proselytize. It is a crooked argument all the same. Judaism is also linked up with a spiritual system and non-material values. One does not exclude the other. Wealth can liberate, as Kierkegaard himself acknowledges.⁵⁷ Kierkegaard seeks polarity, he wants there to be a contrast, yet Christianity is supposed to preach equality,

equal worth, universal neighbourliness.

A group of issues have been addressed above: Kierkegaard's secular use of the Bible (as well as selective), his use of offensive words, the idea of nationality, Communism, marriage, refusal to provide a handwriting specimen for Israel Levin and the concept of being born Jewish or Christian, i.e. a biological argument. There remains one important group, which it would be neglectful to leave out, and that is 'money'. Anti-Semitic remarks to do with money are common and there exist several persistent misunderstandings in that area. It is thought that Jews have money, even when they do not appear wealthy, that they lend money at high interest and so on. Kierkegaard does not always display all groups of misunderstandings but he seems to like those that are a little bit intricate, like this one:

The abstract character of Jews also shows up in their predilection for money - not for property etc. of money value; because money is a pure abstraction.⁵⁸

According to Kierkegaard, Jews have a preference for abstract values because their god is an

abstract, as mentioned above under the Biblical Evidence. Sadly, for Kierkegaard, the theory does not hold. Firstly, one look at the Jewish Prayer Book will reveal that despite the tenet that God has no shape or form, many prayers used every day address 'our Father', just as in Christianity. Human beings have a tendency to transform the incomprehensible into something humanoid, or to what they really need, like a Father. It may be a projection, but it seems universal. Secondly, if one accepted for a while that Jews really do like their cash, then perhaps there is a more straightforward reason for that. It may be that if one has to flee, one can take cash along, not a castle or a piece of land. It takes many generations for a threatened minority to settle so securely in a country that the idea of readiness for flight disappears completely. However, Kierkegaard mostly presents Jews as destitute and homeless. In fact, Jews were moving into employment and skilled work, crafts, professions, and the majority must have been comfortable middle class. There is a hint of *Das Kapital* in the following remark. It is the paranoid thought that Jews, if they had money, could leave and

remove large sums from the country:

When Philip the Handsome of France persecuted the Jews, they emigrated and pulled out their money by way of stocks. Now that the Jews are tolerated everywhere, they emigrate from Germany (young Germany) and pull old Germany's capital after them by forgery [Eftertrykkerie].⁵⁹

This is the kind of suspicion one knows so well today: 'What if the new immigrant does so and so?' In fact, as recounted above in Chapter 1, it was a Jew, a Rothschild in London, who saved Denmark with a huge loan after the state went into bankruptcy, just before Kierkegaard's birth.

In 1841, Kierkegaard, aged 28, fancied a little novel-writing and he made a sketch:

I would quite like to novelistically treat a man, who traded in jewels. It had to be a Jew. His clinging on to these treasures (now and then he could get perplexed about whether to sell them or not, he loved them that much) the vast insight into ruined affluence and the secret history of plenty - this brilliant belonged to a man, who in his time commanded 2 barrels of gold; I shall not name him, he is still alive and is a reputable man, but his money has gone by the board. The great embarrassing scenes when such a one disposes of such things. The otherwise so humble Jew feels his preponderance, the malicious insight into his state, the

secretive whisperings between his (the Jew's) co-initiated, about whether that man is totally ruined or just momentarily etc. etc.⁶⁰

This is a stereotype taken to an extreme. It would have made a terrible novel. The point is the otherness of the Jew and his revengefulness. One wonders whether the young Kierkegaard had first-hand experience with a pawn-broker. He certainly had a period of increasing debt, before his father bailed him out.

It is with relish that Kierkegaard finds in Goethe sentiments like his own:

Goethe remarks that the murder of the Egyptians by the Jews was the opposite Sicilian Vespers. There the host murdered the guest, here the guest the host. But no doubt that will become the relationship of the Jews to the whole of Europe in our time.⁶¹

This is Goethe's quip and Kierkegaard is only agreeing, but knowing what later happened to German Jews, one feels a shiver. Such remarks are dangerous. They build up a climate in which it will be all right to act out hatred and envy and suspicion. Kierkegaard must be held responsible for his lack of justice in this area. His own suffering at the pen of one Jew

did not justify this snow-balling of hatred towards a whole group of people, who never harmed him in any way. Hopefully, it has been sufficiently demonstrated that Kierkegaard was often wrong about facts to do with Jewish life in Denmark. Readers should approach him with caution.

In the next chapter, it will be shown that most commentators on Kierkegaard have overlooked this aspect of his writings, played it down, or explained it away entirely. Nevertheless, the positive things Kierkegaard has to say in other areas win out in the end and he remains popular with Jew and Christian alike, plus a few others as well.

Chapter 6

NOTES

1. Brandes, G. *Søren Kierkegaard* (1879)Verlag v. Johann A.Barth, Leipzig, Ger.240pp. P.1 & p.205.
2. *Pap.VII, 1, B8, p.169-70* (1845). [Not in Hong].
3. *Idem.*
4. *Pap.VII, 1, B13, p.181* (1846). [Not in Hong].
5. *Idem.* See also Chapter 4.
6. *Idem.*
7. *Idem.*
8. Goldschmidt,M.A., *Livs Erindringer og Resultater* [Memoirs and Results] (1877...1965) Vols.I-II, Rosenkilde & Bagger, Cph., DK. Vol.I, p.152: Goldschmidt wrote that there were 'never more than 3000 subscribers'.
9. *Idem.*
10. *Idem.*
11. *Pap.VII, 1, B20, p.191*(1846).[Not in Hong].
12. Meyer, Adolph (*alias* Meir Goldschmidt), *En Jøde* [A Jew] (1845), publ. M.Goldschmidt, Cph.,DK.
13. *Idem.* (B20).
14. *Pap.VII, 1, B21,p.193* (1846).[Not in Hong].

15. *Magister* compares with an MA, but Kierkegaard's degree was upgraded to Doctor in 1854. However, unlike in the U.K., a Master's degree would confer a higher title than 'Mr' [Hr]. So, for instance, 'Magister Kierkegaard'.

Pap.VII, 1, B46, p.220 (1846). [Not in Hong].

16. *Pap.VII, 1, B55, p.239 (1846). [Not in Hong].*
17. *Pap.VIII, 1, A290, p.136 (1847). [Not in Hong].*
18. *Pap.X, 2, A612, pp.438-40 (1850). [Not in Hong].*
19. Same quote as 10.
20. Goldschmidt, *ibid.*
21. *Ibid., Vol.I, p.158. See also Intro. p.15, by Borup, M.*
22. *Pap.VII, 1, B73, p.263-4 (1846). [Not in Hong].*
23. *Pap.VIII, 1, A419, p.183 (1847). [Not in Hong].*
24. *Pap.VI, 2, B235, p.13 (1846-7). [Not in Hong].*
25. *Pap.VIII, 1, A252, p.121 (1847). [Hong 6044].*
26. Goldschmidt, *ibid., p.272.*
27. *Ibid., p.273.*
28. *Ibid., p.158.*
29. *Ibid., p.272.*
30. *Pap.VII, 1, A147, p.95, 7th Sept.1847. [Hong 5937].*
31. As 25.
32. *Pap.X, 1, A69, p.54 (1849). [Not in Hong].*
33. *Pap.X, 1, p.XVI (Time Table), Heiberg, P.A. & Kuhr, V. (1924). See also Cappelørn, N.J., Garff, J., et al. (2003).*

34. Goldhagen, D.J., *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (1996), Little, Brown & Co., Ldn. U.K., pp.604. Goldhagen refers to, "Martin Luther, *Von den Jueden und Iren Luegen* [sic], p.284 and Notes p.557.
35. *Pap.X, 1, A98*, pp.74-8 (1849).[Not in Hong].
36. See 12. above. SK owned the book until his death in 1855. It has No.1547 in the *Auction Catalogue* [=Ktl.].
37. As 35.
38. *Pap.X, 1, A206*, pp.143-4 (1849).[Hong 6377].
39. See Chapter 1.
40. *Pap.X, 1, A226*, pp.152-3 (1849). [Not in Hong].
41. *Pap.X, 1, A446*, p.283 (1849).[Not in Hong].
42. *Idem.*, 'Trepidation' as a translation of *Bæven* (as in *Frygt og Bæven*) would seem a better option than 'Trembling'.
43. *SVV*, p.22 (1923), *KWIX*, Prefaces.
44. (ed.) Hertz, J.H., late Chief Rabbi, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, 2nd ed. (1996), Soncino Press, Ldn., U.K., pp.1045. P.82.
45. *Pap.VIII, 1, A188*, p.93 (1847).[Hong 3351]. See Molbech, C. p.731.
46. *Pap.VII, 1, B19*, p.191 (1846).[Not in Hong].
47. Molbech, C., p.1050.
48. (ed.) Thulstrup, N., *Letters to Levin*.
49. An allusion to the Greenland capital of the same name. 'Good hope' is another way of saying, 'Some hope, Buddy!'. Anything foreign and a little ridiculous in the circumstances. Godthaab is now Nuk.

50. Folk rhyme:

*Dejlige Pidskebaand røde og blaae,
Guld, grønne, violette og graae,
Kommer at kjøbe, kommer at kjøbe,
Lad mig nu ikke saa længe løbe,
Røde, gule og graae i Fleng,
Jeg er en god lille Jødedreng.*

Unknown origin, tr. from the Danish by
ew. See *Pap.VII*, 2, B274, p.315 (1845
-7). [Hong 5859].

51. The sampler came out in 1846: *Album of nu-
levende Mænds og Qvinders Haandskrif-
ter* [Album of the handwritings of
contemporary Men and Women] "for use
in schools when learning to read hand-
writings", B.A. Meyers Forlag, Bdr.
Berlings Litogr. Etablis. Cph. Signed
"J. Rals Petersen". Contained *inter
alia*: Adler, Bournonville[sic], Heiberg,
Hertz, Ingemann, Paludan Müller,
Sibbern, Chr. Winter. Not bad company,
even for Søren Kierkegaard, alas! Copy
held in the Royal Library, Cph. (Early
facsimile).
52. *Pap.VIII,1*, A245, p.117 (1847). [Hong 4121].
53. Milosz, C. *The Captive Mind* (1953...1980)
Penguin, Harmondsworth, U.K. (tr. from
the Polish) Zielonko, J.
54. *Pap.IX*, B.22, p.320-1 (1848). [Not in Hong].
55. *Pap.VIII, 1*, A101, p.49 (1847). [Not in
Hong].
56. *Pap.VII, 2*, B235, p.222 ff. (1846-7). [Not in
Hong].
57. *Pap.X,3*, A345, p.249 (1850). [Not in Hong].
58. *Pap.II*, A708, p.249 (1838). [Hong 1].
59. *Pap.II*, A257, p.115, 8th Sept. 1838. [Hong
4081]. Cf. *SVVIII, 2*, p.27. *KWXIV*,
p.22.
60. *Pap.III*, A105, p.49 (1841). [Hong 5495].

61. *Pap.X, 1, A153* (1849). [Not in Hong]. Also
quoted in Kirmmse (See Chapter 6).
(See Goethe's Notes to *West-östlicher*
Diwan S.W., 6th Vol.)

CHAPTER 7

POSTERITY

In the Chapters above, a case has been made that Søren Kierkegaard was an anti-Semite. The evidence has been plentiful and multi-faceted. There has not been much evidence in the defence because Kierkegaard simply did not say much that was positive about Jews and their religion. In this Chapter, some writers will be introduced who looked at some of this evidence and came to the conclusion that Kierkegaard was not an anti-Semite. After that, another group of writers will make an entry and that group is one which has taken Kierkegaard to their heart although they were not treated well by him; women academics, Jews, other minorities. They take from him what they like and seem unaware of Kierkegaard's restrictive views. Perhaps that is the best one can do, given that humans are flawed and no one is perfect. In the Conclusion, this long and inconclusive discussion will be briefly touched upon again, and the consequences of a negative verdict considered. Some

views of contemporary clergy will bring the thesis to an end. It is possible that a peak of tolerance will have been reached as a new Pope excludes and eliminates from the priesthood men who have as much as the slightest homosexual 'tendencies' (*The Times* 24/11/05 + 26/1/06).¹ Anti-Semitism is rising and now it is about inter-Semitic strife, or Islam against Judaism, Arab against Jew.

What philosophers think, write and say, matters, as history has shown. In the Introduction to the English translation of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, D.C.Watt writes that Hitler's anti-Semitism came from Catholic news-letters and Count Gobineau, "the nineteenth century French writer", but:

None of these however produced the positive side of Hitler's theories, the mystical racist mumbo-jumbo of Aryanism. The originators of this, Nietzsche, Taine, Gobineau, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, are well known though only Houston Stewart Chamberlain is named in *Mein Kampf*.²

Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855-1927) is described as:

Son of an English general, studied in Geneva. Went to Germany in 1885 and remained there until his death...In 1908, he married Eva Wagner, Richard's daughter, and

went to live in Bayreuth.³

Lukács says he wrote:

"My master is primarily Charles Darwin".

and comments:

It must be said that the Darwin he acknowledged was Darwin minus the theory of evolution.⁴

Maybe this is a caution to anyone who wants to pick out of a philosopher's works only the bits she likes. Can one understand Kierkegaard without his love/hate relationship with the Old Testament? Certainly, it will have become evident from the above Chapters that selective versions of his *Journals* left out many of the dubious entries.

If one is looking for the worst there is in print, *Mein Kampf* is not it. The Holocaust denier, David Irving, uses very offensive language, but *Mein Kampf* will do as a measurement of Kierkegaard's anti-Jewish utterings. Some of the material is remarkably similar:

Indeed, the Talmud is not a book to prepare a man for the hereafter, but only for a practical and profitable life in this world.⁵

Compare with Kierkegaard:

One forgets that Judaism's idea of Eternity was so weak because it

promised so much in this life.

...

The thing is that Jews and people in general make God too petty and not sufficiently Spirit.⁶

There is not a great difference. Both say that Judaism is materialistic and lacking in spirituality and both pronounce with great authority - and ignorance. However, there is no encouragement in Kierkegaard to exterminate as one finds so plentifully in Hitler:

But now the time had come to take steps against the whole treacherous brotherhood of these Jewish poisoners of the people. Now was the time to deal with them summarily without consideration for any screams and complaints that might arise. In August, 1914, the whole Jewish jabber about international solidarity had vanished at one stroke from the heads of the German working class...It would have been the duty of a serious government, now that the German worker had found his way back to his nation, to exterminate mercilessly the agitators who were misleading the nation.

If the best men were dying at the front, the least we could do was to wipe out the vermin.

Hitler continues:

All the implements of military power should have been ruthlessly used for the extermination of this pestilence.⁷

This is a manifesto to the German people. It

recommends the total extermination of Jewry in Germany. Although Kierkegaard does not go that far, his language also includes words normally describing 'vermin'. When talking about Jews and their supposed activities, he is fond of words like 'breed' [avle], 'multiply' [formere sig] etc.:

after all, we are not Jews, neither has Christianity offered a prize to the people who can breed [avle] the most children,⁸

and

leaving behind a family is a consolation for not being immortal, the family's reproduction [Forplantelse] is a substitute for the immortality of the individual [Individet]; therefore the person who is hanging on to life so strongly, when he does not assume his immortality, still strives to prolong his life in such a way that he leaves behind a family.

Note, that this has never found its expression as strongly as in Judaism where everything revolves around this: multiply [formerer Eder] and be fruitful. Everything turns on the generations, is a family register - and this divinely sanctioned. Therefore the Jew also had no immortality.⁹

As shown in Chapter 4 above, Kierkegaard was mistaken about Judaism when stating it has no concept of a life after death, but his anxiety about Jewish ability to 'multiply' and his

vocabulary around the subject is akin to Hitler's 'vermin' theory and choice of words, although he stops short of the call for 'extermination'.

Apologists

It is a mystery why the handful of writers analyzing this facet of the oeuvre have chosen to explain away any signs of anti-Semitism, but it is worth looking at the arguments they use in doing this. Bruce Kirmmse has done the most comprehensive research prior to writing his 30-page long article in the Danish journal called *Kierkehistoriske Samlinger*, later followed by a shorter and sharper version in *Kierkegaardiana* 17.¹⁰ K. Bruun Andersen is perhaps the earliest writer in this area when in *Kierkegaardiana* 1, he spends about 3 pages on an *apologia*, having told a damning story which is little more than a rumour and is not retold in recent literature.¹¹ A new contribution is a slim book by Klaus Wivel, *Næsten Intet : en jødisk kritik af Søren Kierkegaard* [Almost Nothing : a Jewish critique of S.K.]. It does not address the anti-Semitism as one might expect, given the title. It is a

treatment of Lévinas's and Rosenzweig's understanding of Kierkegaard.¹² One last book will be mentioned below in this group. It too does not address Kierkegaard's anti-Semitism although its author is a Rabbi and therefore cannot have been blind to the anti-Semitic remarks. His name is Abraham J. Heschel and the book is entitled *A Passion for Truth*. It compares Christianity with Judaism by using a Jewish author, 'the Kotzker', i.e. Rb. Menahem Mendl of Kotzk, and a Christian author, Søren Kierkegaard, who both lived through the first half of the nineteenth century.¹³

Kirmmse is the only serious contender in the field of this thesis. The research was similar, in that it used the journals and it mentions passages which he admits himself, are "grotesque",¹⁴ using "strong and unpleasant language".¹⁵ Kirmmse seems to be building up to an accusation of anti-Semitism, but in both papers, he fizzles out. He is aware of the two different readerships and so, he does it differently. In the ecclesiastic journal (*Kierkehistoriske Samlinger*), he writes:

Thus a good deal of Kierkegaard's
critique of the established

Christianity of his times was couched in anti-Jewish language, a rhetoric which intensified over time, and this accounts for much of his anti-Semitism, which was in general not directed against actual Jews but against putatively Christian elements in his society.¹⁶

In *Kierkegaardiana*, he concludes:

But to demand a pluralistic tolerance - i.e., the sort of tolerance which our times views as genuine, authentic tolerance - is perhaps to demand too much, to demand something anachronistic. In any case Kierkegaard did not share the lukewarm, liberal tolerance of his day, and his statements can be very shocking and repugnant. Perhaps, however, there is some advantage to be found in that repugnance. In contrast to subtle, 'tolerant' forms of anti-Semitism, which each in their own way lead to the disappearance of Jews without anyone taking notice, Kierkegaard's rhetoric is very provocative. He forces us to take a position. And by taking the situation seriously we learn that, *however offensive and objectionable his rhetoric is, it doesn't really have a great deal to do with Jews and Judaism*, but is principally a part of Kierkegaard's battle against the lukewarm and flimsy Christendom of his times.¹⁷

[EW's emphasis]

In the first case, one may protest that Goldschmidt was a very 'actual' Jew, and so were Werder and Levin. The examples in the Chapters above have demonstrated this. It has also been pointed out in Chapter 5 that the very idea that to call someone 'Jewish' as a term of abuse is

already anti-Semitic. It is no excuse that the target might be a Christian, and even in 1855, the target was not solely Christian. So, the excuse will not hold.

In the second case, Kirmmse promotes the old-fashioned hostile anti-Semitism as opposed to the insidious, cloying "liberal tolerance" which would in the end delete Judaism, through intermarriage and assimilation. Hostility was frank and honest. Of course, both kinds are objectionable and one should not praise one kind as it contrasts with another. In a post-holocaust world, one simply cannot say that one kind of anti-Semitism is better than another and that outright repugnant statements are in any way honest. It is the underlined words which come as a surprise by way of a conclusion. The argument suffers from the same fallacy as the one above: using the word 'Jewish' as a derogatory term *is* anti-Semitism! It is the strangest, most incoherent *apologia*. Kierkegaard is not being pedagogical, 'forcing us to take a position', making 'us learn' when he says, 'we are not Jews, we do not give prizes for breeding' (See above). He is not referring

to the Bible either. It is pure prejudice and one should not forget that Kierkegaard was himself the last of seven siblings. Even if 'Family A' had 10 children and 'Family B' had 2, who is to say which is the better family. 'Many children' is not in itself a moral value or dis-value. There is no lesson in this! Kierkegaard is not being 'deliberately provocative' in order to teach his reader something. He simply does not like Jews or Judaism. His 'offensive' language has everything to do with what it purports to address: the Jews. When he frequently lumps in the bad Christians with the Jews in the later years, it does not exonerate him, he is still an anti-Semite. He has not transferred his hostility away from the Jews and onto the bad Christians. In any case, if he suddenly respected Jews, calling someone Jewish would not be a derogatory term anymore, but a compliment and a sign of respect.

Compared with Kirmmse's detailed essays, the article by *Bruun Andersen* is very cursory. He does start out saying:

From time to time, I have in more recent essays on Kierkegaard seen the promotion of the statement that he was a Jew-hater, an anti-Semite.

I have never seen the statement substantiated and this statement has appeared surprising and provocative to me who has a tolerably good knowledge of his writings and journals. It is nowadays one of the worst things that can be said about a person.¹⁸

It would be interesting to get hold of some of those essays but Bruun Andersen provides no notes, so one cannot know what they are. There does not seem to be much of that material left. No one could write the same today. It is also important to know that anti-Semitism was a serious accusation in 1955, ten years after the Danish Liberation and the discovery of the extermination camps. In his research, Bruun Andersen has consulted a register ("A.Ibsen's *Kierkegaard Register*") looking under 'Jews' and 'the Jewish people'. It has been mentioned above that such searches are limiting because many important quotations do not have these words in them and might not have been classified by anyone. He mentions a couple of quotations and concludes:

This is after all what one said and there is therefore hardly any deliberate wickedness in Kierkegaard's words.¹⁹

How is it possible to say that Kierkegaard only said what everyone said and still take him

seriously as a philosopher? Was it not Kierkegaard's own firm idea that being in a group did not excuse behaviour that was unacceptable in a single person? But Bruun Andersen's premise is already unsubstantiated. It is far from clear that 'they all did it'. Bruun Andersen mentions that Kierkegaard in *The Moment* says that the Christians cheat as much as the Jews, but unfortunately, the Jews do not have the state religion. That is the only difference. He is referring to *The Moment* 7. It is a sad example of Kierkegaard's sense of equality and it does not remove the allegation that 'Jews cheat'.

Bruun Andersen argues that what is more important is the question of whether or not Kierkegaard showed anti-Semitism 'in deed' [*iderning*]. He quickly adds that it did not seem to be the case:

He associated with Goldschmidt in a friendly way until the clash over the *Corsair*, and his later remarks about him in the journals only once prods him as a Jew.²⁰

This is not so and it shows why it can be dangerous to use any sort of register or selection. There are many, many proddings of

Goldschmidt as a Jew, for being a Jew (as will have become evident in earlier Chapters here). Registers and selections cut out the tedium and only provide one specimen of each class of remark; but quantity is important and one has to go to the primary text to find out about that.

The most interesting thing about Bruun Andersen's article is an anecdote he has found in "the vagrant of ill repute, W.J.Karup's *The Novel of My Life*, 1864."²¹ Hardly a recommendation of the source to begin with! However, the next page brings every word of the story:

In this profession (he became an apprentice after his confirmation in the Spring of 1844 at one of the larger bookseller's of the City, a Mosaic man), I got to know Kierkegaard, and he had some responsibility for my leaving it.

He often came to the bookshop. One day he found me on my own and initiated a conversation with me. 'Tell me, are you a Jew or a Christian?' he asked, fastening his penetrating look on me. 'I am a Christian', was my reply. 'Yes, that's what I thought', he continued, 'but how come then that you are with a Jew?' 'Because he happened to need me', I replied. 'So, that's the reason!' he exclaimed laughing sarcastically. 'The Devil also needs you; ergo, you must go into his service, isn't that so?' 'But there is after all a great difference between the

Devil and a Jew', I protested. 'Yes, that's true,' Søren Kierkegaard replied, 'but your position is nevertheless very dangerous. You are on the precipice of going to Hell.' 'How come?' I asked, amazed. 'You are in the service of one who is travelling there,' he replied. At that moment, my principal stepped into the bookshop and Søren Kierkegaard drew his attention to the danger of my position on account of his being a Jew. 'It does not matter whether one is a Jew or a Christian,' said the offended bookseller, 'as long as everyone answers to his own and acts justly towards his fellow human beings.' 'No matter!' repeated Søren Kierkegaard and raised a scornful laugh, 'Of course, you are right, one probably doesn't get thrown into the slammer but when one is and remains a Jew, then one still goes straight to Hell! Adieu!' Søren Kierkegaard left banging the door shut after himself. My principal assured me that that man was completely screwed up, and one ought not take any notice of his chatter. But a few days later, I still left 'the dangerous position'.

That was the story. Now comes Bruun Andersen's reaction:

Well, what is one to say to that. The anecdote was probably only written down 20 years after the event. But even though the kernel of it might have been true, it probably is the experiment in the discussion which interested Kierkegaard. He wanted to try and see how the boy and the bookseller would react to the Christian argument. He clothed himself in his famous irony, for he did not believe in the perdition of

others.²²

Here it is again, the ghost of the rumour that Kierkegaard went about and experimented with people's minds. Kierkegaard's thought-experiments were confined to the pages, but he was a practical joker with his nieces and nephews and this is about a boy straight after his confirmation, maybe 15 years old. It has been shown above, that there were many rumours around about another alleged psychological experiment, the promise followed by frustration, which probably did not happen, or at least it was an accident, a misunderstanding with a natural explanation. Here is a well-educated man in 1955 with a good knowledge of Kierkegaard's writings, still hinting that Kierkegaard recklessly went about and damaged people's lives with his scientific experiments on them. His proof that Kierkegaard was not really concerned for the immortal soul of the child, lies in his statement that Kierkegaard "did not believe in the perdition of others". It is true that he does not say, 'Jews go to Hell'. He only says, 'they do not believe in an after-life' (in which he is mistaken, as was shown above). He did not believe baptism was the thing that made a person a Christian. Christianity was acquired

through practice, through the imitation of Christ. However, he also does not say, 'We will all go to Heaven'. But rather than wrestle with the story, one ought to ask first of all: 'Is the anecdote true?' It does seem the source is dubious, although "vagrants of ill repute" rarely write autobiographies. If the story is true, it would add to the evidence of this thesis against Kierkegaard and link up with another story of unsafe origin relating to Kierkegaard's acting upon anti-Semitic feelings. That story refers to someone meeting Kierkegaard on his way to Bellevue in Gentofte (on the coast north of Copenhagen) to take his bath, away from all the *Hanjøder* [male Jews] frequenting the Copenhagen facilities.²³ Would Bruun Andersen also dismiss that story, saying it was a psychological experiment, to see what reaction his anti-Jewish remark would command? Thus rendering him innocent? One wonders then what story could not be explained away in that fashion? Basically, there is no way of knowing. The story is not 'safe' and should be avoided, and has been.

Like Kirmmse, Bruun Andersen presents

evidence that should be conclusive, but he finds an excuse, almost in the last line.

Klaus Wivel and Abraham Heschel fall into the same category. They are both Jews and speak from that platform but neither faces up to the problem of Kierkegaard's anti-Semitism. They both let others speak for themselves, interpreting Judaism as opposed to Kierkegaard's Christianity. As such, they are both, but especially Heschel, informative and helpful in the positive battle to eradicate anti-Semitism by way of education. One may wonder, though, whether Kierkegaard's Christianity is representative enough for such a purpose.

Wivel's title, incidentally, contains a pun in Danish where 'the neighbour' is called *næsten* [the next], but it can also mean 'almost'. So: *Næsten Intet* means 'almost nothing/the neighbour nothing' as 'intet' means 'nothing'. The message is that in Kierkegaard, the neighbour does not matter, only the self does, but that reduces the individual to 'almost nothing'. There are, however, some harsh words against Kierkegaard via Lévinas:

When Lévinas accuses Kierkegaard's rhetoric of having justified "violence and terrorism", he refers to the idea that language has to be understood concretely because it releases a concrete action. Talking about sacrificing implies the murder.

And

Lévinas accuses Kierkegaard's suspension of the ethical, in its extreme consequence, of having led to National Socialism. It may well be that Lévinas hereby refers to the anti-Semitic streak in Kierkegaard's thinking whereby Kierkegaard associates the despised general public with Judaism.²⁴

However, these supposed harsh accusations are disputed by Kirmmse who reviewed Wivel's book in *Kierkegaardiana* and argued that Wivel is abusing his two main sources, Lévinas and Rosenzweig, by repeating the same phrases as if there were a lot of quotes against Kierkegaard when the truth is that there are few and most are appreciative. Kirmmse accuses Wivel of really wanting to argue against Christianity entire, anticipating typical Christian attitudes in Kierkegaard which are simply not there.²⁵

It is a common criticism of Kierkegaard that 'the other' and 'society' play such a small role. It would be self-defeating if this thesis joined in that criticism because 'the Jew'

figures prominently here as 'an other', albeit negatively, and 'Judaism' an enemy of his own 'society'.

Martin Buber has taken Kierkegaard's 'single one' and extended the concept to include the 'thou' but also goes backwards to introduce a difference between the 'I-thou' relationship as opposed to the 'I-it' relationship. There is also the 'Eternal thou' which perhaps is God.²⁶ Buber is also a Jewish writer but does not speak for mainstream Orthodoxy. It is, however, a deeply Jewish thought that man must involve himself in life. He cannot withdraw to live in solitude:

It cannot be that the relation of the human person to God is established by the subtraction of the world. ...He must put his arms round the vexatious world, whose true name is creation; only then do his fingers reach the realm of lightning and of grace.²⁷

This is a clear contrast to Kierkegaard's emphasis on celibacy and withdrawal in order to reach for perfection and a total surrender to God. These two basic positions are not open to discussion because 'the categories', i.e. 'premises', differ, but many of Kierkegaard's

attacks on Judaism assume *his* position to be a natural truth. But Buber does not fight Kierkegaard, he respects him and takes what he can use and makes it his own, to build on.

One more writer will be mentioned in this group of apologists: George Pattison.²⁸ It has to be remembered, though, that during the period in which Kierkegaard was pondering the archetype of the Wandering Jew, which is the main concern here, his interest was not offensive although one might find the legend itself offensive. Kierkegaard, the young student, is simply playing with ideas and the link with reality seems tenuous. Therefore, one might to a certain degree accept Pattison's statement:

The key point is this: Kierkegaard's concern with the Wandering Jew is not directed towards delineating and thereby facilitating the exclusion of the other, the one-who-we-are-not, but aims at articulating a condition that belongs to the inner destiny of all who inhabit the condition of modernity.²⁹

Indeed, Kierkegaard would later merge this type with the Biblical type of Moses, in order to identify with its tragic alienation. Anti-Semitism is not a static within a person (See Chapter 3). Like all other ideas, it waxes and

wanes and is subject to external influences and provocations. Pattison heads this chapter of his book, 'Cosmopolitan Faces' but as discussed already in Chapter 2, this phrase is a quote in Kierkegaard and not part of his own vocabulary. This more political anti-Semitism, as presented by Pattison, was not part of Kierkegaard's anti-Semitism, which was more social and Biblical. Quite apart from this, his use of the term is not directed at Jews but at Hegelians coming up from Germany.³⁰ If Pattison was concerned about any anti-Semitism in Kierkegaard, he did not go to the many places where it can be found. The focus of his interest seems to lie more with Kierkegaard's 'nihilistic' tendencies and his connecting the Wandering Jew with the concept of 'despair'.

Followers

Brian Barry in his *Justice Between Generations* writes:

We can be quite certain...that people alive in several centuries time will not be able to do anything that will make us better off or worse off now, although we can to some degree make them better off or worse off.³¹

However:

Admittedly, our successors have absolute control of something in the future that we may care about now: our reputations.³²

It is true that the dead are vulnerable to reappraisals of their works and with those, their reputations. One should not undertake such lightly. Kierkegaard is a writer who perhaps gave his best to those he did not know, the later generations, and one cannot help but be emotionally stirred by his words which are frequently affectionate and trusting. It cannot surprise anyone that he had followers. His calls to imitate Christ and to live the faith were impressive, especially to the young, and he has had many followers.

One such was Simone Weil (1909-43). Although born a Jew, she regarded herself a Christian, but never formally converted. She was a keen reader of Kierkegaard and had been a brilliant student at the Sorbonne. She decided to go and live among the 'people' and therefore took a job in various car factories, most notoriously Renault, hoping to be able to help the workers by for instance giving them more education. She strongly believed that:

there is no way of opening broad vistas which the mind can observe without entering them. One must enter the subject before one can see anything.³³

It was here she had a burglary into her bedsitter and found to her amusement that the thief had made off with her copy of Kierkegaard's *The Seducer's Diary*. Many of her thoughts are similar to Kierkegaard's, as for instance her unease about the power of the Church. She also suffered from failing health, which caused her much pain, and she too welcomed this as a kind of purification process, the strong spirit in the weak body. As a Jew she had to flee France and went with her parents to New York, but soon she made her way back to Europe, London, from where she hoped to be able to take an active part in the French Resistance, preferably by re-entering France. She denied herself any foods her compatriots could not have and virtually starved herself to death. She was very critical of Judaism but her arguments are, unlike Kierkegaard's, calm and disciplined.

Another Jewish writer, who was preoccupied with the thought of Kierkegaard was György Lukács (1885-1971). In his *Destruction of Reason*, he holds Kierkegaard responsible for

a number of negative influences on European culture, but he never addresses the problem of anti-Semitism in Kierkegaard directly. One could argue that he does so indirectly, which would be fitting, when he refers to his "aristocratism".³⁴ His main argument, though, is that Kierkegaard helped dissolve reason in European thought:

Before the outbreak of the 1848 revolution, which was an international, European event, Romantic individualism went to pieces for good. The most important thinker during its crisis and fall, the Dane Søren Kierkegaard, formulated in the most original way the philosophy of the then current Romantic-individualistic agony.³⁵

He continues:

Orthodox Protestant religiosity and Kierkegaard's strictly Lutheran faith in the Bible were of no use to present needs. But Kierkegaard's critique of Hegelian philosophy, as a critique of all striving for objectivity and universal validity by reasoned thought, and of all concepts of historical progress, acquired a very strong contemporary influence.³⁶

It is difficult to judge Kierkegaard's influence in Germany from the outside, but it certainly began sooner there, as the German translation was available much earlier than the English one. Iris Murdoch, however, makes the same point as

Lukács concerning the consequences of Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel. She writes:

It is Kierkegaard who most specifically, though in some ways tiresomely, displays the transformation of an idealist philosophy into a phenomenology of individual moral struggle.³⁷

And:

Since Hegel, phenomenology has been the main stream of philosophical thought on the Continent. But though it is strictly Hegel's child, it received an injection in extreme infancy from Hegel's enemy, Kierkegaard; it never recovered from this, and it developed in consequence what its parent would probably regard as curious deformities.³⁸

Murdoch argues that the 'young Hegelians' had to defend Hegel against Kierkegaard to such a degree that the logical system became a reaction and not a free-standing ideology. After that, the two philosophers differ. Lukács talks about 'religious atheism', with Schleiermacher as its proponent, and later Kierkegaard:

That in Kierkegaard existential philosophy was already no more than the ideology of the saddest philistinism, of fear and trembling, of anxiety, did not stop it conquering wide intellectual circles in Germany on the eve of Hitler's seizure of power and the nihilistic period of so-called heroic realism.³⁹

Murdoch does not go that far:

the man whom Kierkegaard describes may live plunged in doubt and confusion but he lives in a universe where there is God.⁴⁰

Lukács's point is that with the 'destruction of reason', the road was cleared for Hitler's Nazism. Both Murdoch and Lukács view Kierkegaard as a thinker who had strong and fundamental influence. One could say that Lukács's claims as to Kierkegaard's responsibility in European history are much larger than the accusation of anti-Semitism raised in this thesis, but they underpin the idea that what philosophers think and write matters and it can lend legitimacy to political systems that can only be called 'totalitarian'.

This chapter began with a section on Hitler and his philosophers and it has led back to Hitler, but before closing this last chapter, it should be mentioned that despite Kierkegaard's 'aristocratism' and anti-Semitism, he has had a large following among not only Jews but also minority groups in general.

Minority Groups

In a very interesting book on Black American philosophers, George Yancy, has collected a series of interviews with Black philosophers, seventeen in all (out of which 7 are women). Two people here are both Black and Jewish. They have all experienced limitations and set-backs because of their dark skin but they also highlight the new preference in some universities for non-Eurocentric philosophy, although one is a Kantian. Some have found those limitations inside of themselves and see European culture as the former culture of slavery and oppression. Nevertheless, three of these philosophers mention Kierkegaard as a major inspiration. Cornel West is probably the best known of them all and speaks from Harvard University. He describes an interest in Kierkegaard from the early age of thirteen:

I think early on I was just in some sense seized by a certain kind of terror that struck me as being at the heart of things human and a profound sadness and sorrow that struck me as being at the core of the human condition. And so in reading Kierkegaard [I found] someone who was seriously and substantively wrestling with a certain level of melancholia, I was struck by his very honest and

candid...encounter with what he understood to be this terror, this suffering..and sorrow.⁴¹

In other words, Kierkegaard was a kind of friend *in extremis*, someone who had been there himself. West derives comfort from a fellow sufferer. As an adult, he has retained his interest in Kierkegaard.

It is interesting to note that the book writes 'Blacks' with a capital and 'whites' without. Is there perhaps a bit of discrimination going on here?

Joyce Mitchell Cook was the first African-American woman to receive a PhD in America (Yale, 1965). She also went to Oxford for her first degree. She says about Kierkegaard that:

I am not convinced that he is a major philosopher although he certainly is a major theologian ...Of all the existentialists, I noticed that my Black students were very sympathetic to Kierkegaard. It was as if they interpreted his emphasis on subjectivity as truth in opposition, not to scientific truth, which is what Kierkegaard intended, but to the truth of the white man. I have to admit that some analogies are striking. For my own part, I owe it to Kierkegaard to have reminded me of the importance of the claims of existence over the claims of theory. It was he who remarked that philosophers build castles but

live in shacks nearby. To me
this is an admonishment to put your
life where your mouth is.⁴²

So, to Mitchell Cook, Kierkegaard is more of a theologian than a philosopher. That is a common discussion around Kierkegaard. He was a student at both faculties, so it is not so strange that there should be that discussion. It is more interesting here to note that again Kierkegaard seems a friend in adversity, this time against 'the truth of the white man'. He is also appreciated for his demand that Philosophy should be applied and one should live as one 'preaches'. Again, honesty is the attraction.

Robert E. Birt is the third Kierkegaard admirer in this collection. He observes that there are very few Black people in Philosophy. Most seek the more practical disciplines, like Law, Medicine, Business, but:

there's no particular reason why
there are no Blacks in philosophy.
I guess they just sing and dance,
but have no interest in intellectual pursuits.⁴³

An ironic acknowledgement of Black self-curtailment in response to White discrimination and expectation. It is a feature in the book that Black people feel that one prejudice is that Blacks are racially less intelligent.

In fact, one of his areas of specialization is 'theories of alienation'. He does elaborate, though, saying that Philosophy is seen by Blacks as "a white thing". Like Baldwin, he claims that:

even the Jew who is despised and persecuted is still a white man among white men.⁴⁴

He says, like many others in this book, that race is a social construct. Biologically, it does not exist. Birt also specializes in 'existentialism' and that is his interest in Kierkegaard. He does not express any particular views on him. It is odd that he is not aware of the fact that many Jews are also black, given his specialization. In fact, in Jewish circles, colour of skin is of little interest. What matters is whether the mother is Jewish or not. One could also say that White men can be pretty nasty to each other, as the Holocaust has shown.

The Black/White issue is fundamentally different from the Jew/Gentile one although there are certain similarities. It is still interesting to see how Kierkegaard speaks to the 'outcast', the lonely and the sad across all barriers, in spite of his own firm prejudices.

What Now?

It has been shown in the Chapters above that Kierkegaard was guilty of anti-Semitism and unlike the exculpators, this writer will not seek excuses but try to face a future Søren Kierkegaard, a blemished theologian and philosopher. One cannot hope for a better future without a confrontation with the past. Philosophy now will not allow racism to parade as wisdom in academic publications. Some of Kierkegaard's statements have been shown to be sheer misinformation and that cannot be tolerated. One should read Kierkegaard, but awareness should be raised as to the dangers of this reading and certainly the non-Jewish population should be much better informed about Judaism, so that plain lies will not be believed. One should not read Kierkegaard without a filter, so that one did not 'overlook' the anti-Semitism, and one should confront the prejudices one by one and learn from that as well. There is indeed only one human race.

Chapter 7

NOTES

1. *The Times* 24/11/05 + 26/1/06.
2. Hitler, A., *Mein Kampf*, (tr.) Manheim, R. with an Introduction by D.C. Watt (1943), Radius Book/Hutchinson, Ldn., U.K., 629pp. The book was unavailable in England from 1944 to 1969. p.xxvii.
3. *Ibid.*, footnote, p.245.
See also Chamberlain, H.S., *Arische Weltanschauung* (1916), Bruckmann, A.G., Munich, Germany, 94pp.
In this work, Chamberlain expresses admiration for the Indian caste system and uses terms of hygiene in connection with race, *Rassenreinheit* [racial cleanliness]. Richard Wagner became his father-in-law.
4. Lukács, G., *The Destruction of Reason* (1953 ...1962), (tr.) Palmer, P., Hermann Luchterhand Verlag GmbH, Berlin, Ger. 852pp. (Merlin Press, 1980).
5. Hitler, *ibid.*, p.278.
6. (ed.) Thulstrup, N., *Søren Kierkegaards Papirer* [SK's Papers = Pap.](1968-70), Vols.I-XIII, Gyldendal, Cph., DK. (Later extended by Cappelørn, N.J. with 3 more volumes). *Pap.X,1*, A426, pp.273-4 (1849) [Hong 843].
7. Hitler, *ibid.*, pp.154-5.
8. *Pap.XI,1*, A169, pp.132-3 (1854). [Hong 2618].

9. *Pap.XI,1*, A150, pp.114-15 (1854). [Hong 2617]. In the discussion about whether certain words are offensive, e.g. *avle* [breed], it is worth noting that Kirmmse also finds them offensive. He calls them 'veterinary words' (See the Introduction). Clearly, in the right context they are not offensive, but the context in Kierkegaard make them so.
10. *Kierkehistoriske Samlinger* [Ecclesiastical-Historical Collections], (1992); Kirmmse, B.H., 'Kierkegaard, *Jødedommen og Jøderne*' [Kierkegaard, Judaism and the Jews], pp.77-107. The article has a summary in English at the end., Cph., DK.

Kierkegaardiana 17 (1994), Kirmmse, B.H., 'Kierkegaard, Jews, and Judaism', pp.83-97, Cph., DK.
11. *Kierkegaardiana* 1 (1955), Bruun Andersen, K. 'Kierkegaard og jøderne' [Kierkegaard and the Jews], pp.84-7, Cph., DK.
12. Wivel, K., *Næsten Intet : en jødisk kritik af Søren Kierkegaard* [Almost Nothing : a Jewish critique of S.K.], (1999), C.A. Reitzel, Cph., DK., 118pp.
13. Heschel, A.J., *A Passion for Truth* (1973... 1995), Jewish Lights Publishing, Woodstock, Vermont, U.S.A., 323pp. Note, the first publication was also posthumous.
14. Kirmmse, *Kierkegaardiana*, *ibid.*, p.90.
15. *Ibid.*, p.83.
16. Kirmmse, *Kierkehistoriske Samlinger*, *ibid.*, p.106.
17. Kirmmse, *Kierkegaardiana*, *ibid.*, p.95.
18. Bruun Andersen, *ibid.*, p.84.
19. *Ibid.*, p.85.
20. *Ibid.*, p.85.
21. *Ibid.*, p.86.

22. *Ibid.*, p.86-7.
23. (ed.) Johansen, Steen, *Erindringer om Søren Kierkegaard* [Recollections about S.K.] (1955), Steen Hasselbalchs Forlag, Cph., DK., 60pp. P.28. The story is recounted by Fr. Hammerich to whom it was told.
24. Wivel, *ibid.*, p.117-18.
25. *Kierkegaardiana* 22 (2002), *ibid.*, pp.237-40.
26. Buber, M., *Ich und Du* [I and Thou] (1923... 2005), Gütersloher Verlagshaus GmbH, Gütersloh, Ger., 163pp.

I and Thou (tr.) Smith, R.G. (1957... 2004), Continuum, Ldn., U.K., 101pp. P.21.
- Buber, M., *Between Man & Man* (1947), Kegan Paul, Ldn., U.K., 252pp.
27. Buber, *Between...*, *ibid.*, pp.88-9.
28. See also *Kierkegaardiana* 19, Golomb, J., 'Kierkegaard in Zion', (1998), pp.130-7.

Kierkegaard Studies Yearbook (2002), Green, R.M., 'Fear & Trembling : A Jewish Appreciation', pp.137-49.
29. Pattison, G., *Kierkegaard, Religion and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Culture* (2002) Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K., 245pp. PP.72-95.
30. (eds.) Heiberg, J.L. & Drachmann, A.B., *Søren Kierkegaards Samlede Værker* [SK's Collected Works = SV] (1920-38), Bianco Luno Press, now by Gyldendal, Cph., DK. Vols.I-XIV. SVXIII, p.60.

(eds. & trs.) Hong, H. & E., *Kierkegaard's Writings (=KW)*, (1978-2000), Princeton University Press, Princeton, U.S.A. Vol.I-XXVI. KWI, p.64.
31. (eds.) Rosen, M. & Wolff, J., *Political Thought* (1999), Oxford University Press, Oxford, U.K., 402pp. P.293. Rosen and Wolff refer to: Brian Barry "Justice Between Generations" in

Law, Society and Morality : Essays in Honour of H.L.A. Hart, (ed.) P.M.S. Hacker and J. Raz (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1977) pp.268-84".

32. *Ibid.*
33. Winch, P., *Simone Weil : 'The Just Balance'* (1989) Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K., P.161.
See also: Weil, S., *The Notebooks of Simone Weil*, Vols.I-II(1956) Routledge & Kegan, Ldn., U.K.
Weil, S., *First and Last Notebooks* (1970) Oxford University Press.
34. Lukács, *ibid.*, p.277.
35. *Ibid.*, p.490.
36. *Ibid.*, p.491.
37. Murdoch, I., *Existentialists and Mystics*, (1999) Chatto & Windus, Ldn., U.K., 530pp. P.87.
38. *Ibid.*, p.102.
39. Lukács, *ibid.*, p.491.
40. Murdoch, *ibid.*, p.134.
41. Yancy, G., *African-American Philosophers* (1998), Routledge, New York, U.S.A., pp.358. Yancy in conversation with Cornel West, pp.32-48. Pp.32-3.
42. *Ibid.*, Yancy in conversation with Joyce Mitchell Cook, pp.263-85.
43. *Ibid.*, Yancy in conversation with Robert E. Birt, pp.343-58. P.351.
44. *Ibid.*, p.354-5.

CONCLUSION

Hegel's remark that Philosophy must beware lest it starts trying to be 'upbuilding', was vigorously contested by Kierkegaard. The quote has been placed on the cover of this thesis as a provocation and a challenge. As a philosopher, one tries to be dispassionate and balanced, to apply fairness and logic. One should seek the truth without 'fear or favour' and then one comes upon the blemish of anti-Semitism in a thinker as influential and revered as Søren Kierkegaard. It seems one's duty to speak up about it and to treat all of what Kierkegaard has said with the same seriousness. This is what Kirmmse did, but he did not bring into the discussion the Jewish perspective and he admitted that he had hardly exhausted the subject with his two papers, which are basically one and the same. I have tried to add this perspective, partly by providing a bit of Jewish-Danish history and partly by arguing from the area of Jewish values. Like Kirmmse, I have

trawled through all the *Works* and all the *Papers*, astonished that ideas about Jews and Judaism played such a prominent role throughout Kierkegaard's life. One may wonder how this theme would have fared had Meir Goldschmidt not impacted upon the life to such an extent with his satirical journal *The Corsair*. The fact is that he did and a dormant negativity against Jews and Judaism in Kierkegaard became very active indeed, ending up as a passionate rage that found expression in page after page of his journals. The surprise has been that there was so much. The sheer volume made the initial research very laborious indeed, but on the other hand, there was no lack of evidence to prove that here was an area of Kierkegaard's *oeuvre* which needed scrutiny and which had in the main been overlooked. This thesis will not be the last word on the subject. There is much more to be done on it and as more and more is written about anti-Semitism, the concept and definitions, new tools have become available with which to do it. For instance, instead of using the *Oxford English Dictionary's* phrase 'hostility', when defining anti-Semitism, one could speak of 'giving someone a negative

identity regardless of their acts, because they are Jews/Blacks etc.', or 'a structural relationship based on the subordination of one racial group by another'.¹ There are many new attempts at better definitions, to cover also 'omissions' which are a large part of discrimination. Kierkegaard, for instance, had no Jewish or Catholic friends. One has to query the statement that outspoken dislike is better than a secret denial of difference or attempts to convert, especially after the Holocaust of World War II. Outspoken dislike opens the doors to hostile acts and violence. It provides a licence.

Kierkegaard speaks movingly about the responsibility of the individual, he is virtually synonymous with Individualism. So, how does that fit in with his many anti-Semitic remarks, of which a large amount has been presented above? I have tried to find explanations in his country's history and his own but there is no one trauma apart from the later *Corsair Affair*, which he himself invited.

Despite this contradiction within Kierke-

gaard's writings, younger generations have ignored the racism and fastened on the Individualism. Ironically he has become a support for people suffering exclusion because of their race. Rabbis have analyzed his works and politely ignored any offence.² Only the majority members can get away with such abuse. That is the temptation that has to be resisted, even under pressure. Just as a kibbutz inwardly functions as a socialist system, while outwardly it is a capitalist competitor, so a nation, a society, can operate inwardly as an egalitarian club, while any newcomer or non-belonger is kept firmly outside and below. Perhaps this was the way Kierkegaard lived with his philosophical incoherence: Individualism for Us, tyranny for Them.

What is one to do with the moral leaders who cannot live up to their own strict demands? Kierkegaard chose pseudonyms while admitting that he was human. He did not live his life like Jesus. Sartre made promiscuity part of his teachings. Either way, people followed and were hurt. Can he still teach us? Is it all pick-and-mix? How do we guard against moral corrup-

tion when we read seminal works by great thinkers and writers? These are the questions we must ask of our ethical leaders, and of ourselves. There are no answers, or there are too many, but we must keep asking and attempting to answer. In the process, we explore our moral boundaries and gain strength.

Conclusion

NOTES

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 2. Gellman, J.I., *Abraham! Abraham!* (2003)
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